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Near East & South Asia

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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

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Arab-Israeli Talks

Israelis, Palestinians Discuss Transfer of Power

Agreement Reached on Taxation, Budget

NC2308152394 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1415 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] Cairo, 23 Aug (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation of the Palestinian National Authority [PNA] and head of the Palestinian delegation to the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, has said that in today's negotiating session, the two sides agreed on an early transfer of the powers of taxation and the general budget in the West Bank to the Palestinians.

He said in a statement after the morning session that a final agreement on an early transfer of powers in the areas of education, culture, youth and sports, social affairs, taxes and the budget, health, and tourism, is expected to be signed tomorrow, Wednesday [24 August].

He said the Israelis offered an early transfer of the international cooperation power to the Palestinian side.

Dr. Sha'th said discussions have not yet been completed on the general document, which specifies the principles that govern not only the previous areas but also the other 34 remaining areas, such as electricity, water, and telephones.

He said the negotiators are now working on an agreement on a timetable for early empowerment in the remaining areas, after implementation of the transfer of the education authority began Sunday.

Sha'th described the morning session of negotiations, in which taxes and the budget were discussed, as tough and hot. "But we reached an agreement at the end," he said.

He said the Israeli delegation was trying to take measures to decrease the amount of taxes that the self-rule authority will receive.

On a possible meeting between PNA Chairman Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, Sha'th said this depends on the degree of success achieved by the current Palestinian-Israeli negotiations.

If progress is made, he said, there will be no reason for such a meeting.

For his part, Danny Rothschild, head of the Israeli delegation, said there is progress in the talks, and that today's discussions focused on taxation and the budget.

He said negotiations are continuing to resolve pending issues.

Agreement Reportedly Reached

TA2408045194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400 GMT 24 Aug 94

[Text] At the Cairo talks, agreement has been reached on Palestinian early empowerment in the fields of income tax collection and VAT. Other issues, however, still need to be discussed such as the timetable for transfers of authorities. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that sources in the Israeli delegation believe that the agreement will be initialled today.

This morning, the Civil Administration in Judaea and Samaria will begin transferring the offices of the educational system to the representatives of the Palestinian Authority. The offices in Ramallah will be turned over to the Palestinians today and by Sunday [28 August] the education offices will be transferred to Palestinian control throughout the rest of Judaea and Samaria.

Talks Resume; Negotiators Comment

NC2408091794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0822 GMT 24 Aug 94

[Text] Cairo, 24 Aug (MENA)—The Israeli-Palestinian negotiations on the early transfer of power in the West Bank resumed in Cairo this morning. Dr. Nabil Sha'th, minister of planning and international cooperation in the Palestinian National Authority [PNA], chaired the Palestinian delegation while Dani Rothschild, coordinator of the Israeli Government's activities in the occupied territories, led the Israeli side.

Sources close to the negotiators reported that although agreement was reached yesterday on the transfer of taxation and budget powers to the Palestinians, some details still have to be worked out in connection with PNA tax collection and purchase tax. They said these details will be discussed today.

The sources added that discussion of the general document that lays down the principles to be followed in connection with the exercising of power in every sphere has been completed. In addition to education, cultural, health, tourism, social, budget, and tax affairs, the document covers 34 other fields in line with the Israeli-Palestinian agreement.

The sources said that the negotiations lasted until late last night to complete the discussion of unresolved issues.

Today's session, which will be the last, will witness the initialing of the agreement on the early transfer of power to the Palestinians in the spheres of education, cultural, health, tourism, tax, budget, and social affairs. A timetable to implement the transfer will also be completed. The transfer of authority over education and cultural affairs has already begun.

[In a related report, Paris AFP in English at 0845 GMT on 24 August adds the following: "Nabil Sha'th said the

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negotiators Tuesday almost finished hammering out an overall agreement establishing the basic principles for transferring powers to the Palestinians in the West Bank.

["There are differences on a lot of things, but we are getting over them,' he said.

["In the talks on taxation the two sides Tuesday reached agreement on income tax, but still had to work out the value added tax arrangements, Captain Hannie Jessuran, spokeswoman for Dani Rothschild, said.

["She also said the delegates would discuss how to enforce tax collection, including the appointment of tax collectors.

["The two sides agreed that Israel would continue supervising tourist sites in the West Bank, whereas the Palestinian Authority would take charge of tourist facilities, including hotels and guides, diplomats said.

["Jessuran described the talks as 'hard work' but said 'a good atmosphere' prevailed.

["She said Sha'th and Rothschild would probably sign the accord, but the delegations would need to get permission from their leaders first."]

Jordan, Israel Open Talks on Northern Border

JN2308200794 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 1900 GMT 23 Aug 94

[From the "News at Ten" program]

[Text] Jordanian and Israeli negotiators opened talks on the northern border to discuss demarcation. The talks follow last week's conclusion of negotiations at the Israeli side of the Dead Sea.

Today's talks centered on Jordanian territorial rights to a triangle of land on the northern cease-fire line with Israel. The land in question bordered by the Jordan and al-Yarmuk Rivers is cultivated by an Israeli kibutz. The agenda included technical details about how to resolve the dispute such as whether maps or experts would be called upon.

Inter-Arab Affairs

League Official on Israeli Shelling in Lebanon

NC2308162094 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] Ambassador 'Adnan 'Imran, assistant Arab League secretary general, has stressed that the continuing barbaric Israeli shelling and destruction of the civilian areas and targets in south Lebanon shows the real Israeli policy that aims to impede the Middle East peace process.

He told the radio correspondent: It is within this context that one can understand Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's statements on the willingness to withdraw from south Lebanon on condition that this is preceded by a number of measures that neutralize Lebanon's capaility to confront the occupation, be it the liquidation of the resistance or the security measures that Israel is demanding.

Sudanese Envoy to Arab League Presents Credentials

NC2308113794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1100 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] Cairo, 23 Aug (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid today received Ambassador al-Tayyib Ahmad Yusuf al-Kurdufani, who presented his credentials as the new Sudanese permanent delegate to the Arab League.

Following the meeting, al-Kurdufani said that he discussed current Arab issues with the secretary general, as well as efforts to restore Arab solidarity.

Ambassador al-Kurdufani expressed his hope that Arabs will surmount their disagreements so that the Arab nation can once again thrive as a strong and cohesive nation. He added that he will meet tomorrow with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa to present a copy of his credentials as Sudanese ambassador to Egypt.

Islamic Affairs

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 19 Aug

NC2308174094

[Editorial Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 19 August issue of the Arabic-language newspaper Cairo AL-SHA'B that pertain to political Islamic issues.

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1. U.S. Aid Tied to Commitment to ICPD Decisions
2. Ulema, Scholars Criticize ICPD
3. Minister Sued Over Suppressed Autopsy Report
4. Deputies To Question Minister's Decision on Veil
5. Official Reiterates Islamic Line, Denies Rift
6. Islamic Scholar Demands Access to Media
7. Book Views Islamic Groups' Vision of West

U.S. AID TIED TO COMMITMENT TO ICPD DECISIONS

An approximately 300-word report by 'Amir 'Abd-al-Mun'im on page 1 claims that U.S. aid will be linked to commitment to the decisions adopted by the International Conference on Population and Development [ICPD], due to open in Cairo on 5 September.

ULEMA, SCHOLARS CRITICIZE ICPD

With the opening date of the ICPD approaching, Islamic scholars and writers are stepping up their opposition to its agenda. Protests by leading ulema to the conference are given wide coverage in this issue of AL-SHA'B.

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Prominent Islamic Preacher Shaykh Mutawallai al-Sha'rawi, in an approximately 150-word statement on page 1, joins other critics in rejecting the ICPD's agenda for running counter to Islamic shari'ah. A statement by al-Azhar Ulema Front criticizing the ICPD is published on page 3. On the same page, an approximately 3,000-word report by Jamal Imbabi features remarks by preachers, scholars, and academicians against ICPD. Leading Islamic preacher Dr. Yusuf al- Qaradawi explains that Egypt, the seat of al-Azhar, should not have hosted such a conference, which he says is "shrouded with suspicion." He notes that the conference's documents deal with issues that "are rejected by the shari'ah, values, and customs" such as "adultery and homosexuality," although the conference documents do not mention them explicitly. Concerning birth control, Dr. al-Qaradawi emphasizes that "birth control is permissible for individuals within the limits of their personal circumstances if it is justified by legitimate requirements, such as the health of the mother or inability to provide care. But to generalize it, as the conference document stipulates, is impermissible," he adds.

"Islamic thinker" Dr. Muhammad 'Imarah joins other critics in condemning the conference's agenda. He argues that the "West and the domination-seeking world organizations want to curb reproduction by nations and peoples of the South." "They find in permitting abortion and in disassociating sexual relations from procreation ways for ending the population growth in the countries of the South. By so doing, they impose on our Islamic civilization values and ethics that conflict with it, and this is a stark example of the intellectual invasion and cultural hegemony which the disciples of Westernization and the slaves of Western enlightenment deny."

Islamic preacher Dr. 'Abd-al-Rashid Saqr views the conference as a "world conspiracy against Islam in Egypt." He adds: "They know that should Islam triumph in Egypt, it will triumph in the entire Arab world. Thus, the conference is an attempt to contain the Islamic tide and to distance the Egyptian people from their religion."

Labor Party Secretary General 'Adil Husayn continues his campaign against the ICPD. In an approximately 5,000-word article on page 5, Husayn believes that the conference is rejected both on religious and scientific grounds. He notes that the U.S. Administration, under President Reagan, rejected the values sought by a similar conference held in Mexico in 1984. The U.S. delegation to the conference, he adds, strongly "rejected any government policy that imposes birth control by force on its citizens." The U.S. Government, he continues, went as far as threatening to cut its population aid to any country or organization that encouraged abortion. Describing studies that call for the need to curb population growth because of limited world resources as "unscientific," he argues that the "scientific and technological revolution" and the proper application of the technology worldwide could make it possible for "earth to accommodate several times more than the current world population." He adds: "They are trying to annihilate people, particularly in our Islamic nation, not on grounds of limited resources, as they claim, or out of a desire to combat poverty, but out of a satanic wish to maintain the unjust international conditions, to ensure their continued domination and, consequently, to continue their plunder of our wealth." He cites a number of reports and studies calling for a reduction in world population. He says that a Human Development Report issued by the UNDP in June 1994 provides the "necessary mechanisms to implement the program issued by the Cairo conference." They include the need to increase the powers of the UN administrative body and its affiliated agencies, including the World Bank and the IMF. The report also calls for setting up an international court and an international police force and an "economic security council" authorized to issue "punitive resolutions" against those who disagree with its economic and population policies and to even "dispatch military troops if necessary."

In a boxed comment on the same page, Husayn criticizes some Muslims ulema who ruled in favor of birth control for individuals and for society as a whole. He adds: "By so doing, they have turned what is permissible as an exceptional measure in specific circumstances into a general policy of birth control as a permanent and strategic principle. This, I believe, needs to be reconsidered."

MINISTER SUED OVER SUPPRESSED AUTOPSY REPORT

An approximately 100-word report by Khalid Yunus on page 1 says that the Committee for the Defense of Freedoms in the Lawyers Association has filed a lawsuit against the justice minister and the attorney general. The committee wants lawyers to be given access to the file on the death of their colleague 'Abd-al-Harith Madani, who died while in police custody on 26 April 1994. They also want access to the final autopsy report. The committee also called for "the release of all detained lawyers, including Muntasir al-Zayyat, whose remand in custody is expected to be renewed on 21 August."

DEPUTIES TO QUESTION MINISTER'S DECISION ON VEIL

'Abd-al-Fattah Fayid writes in an approximately 80-word report on page 1 that several independent deputies in the People's Assembly have submitted applications to question the education minister's decision to "ban the veil in school." The report adds: "The deputies, including Shaykh Jamal Qutb and Kamal Khalid, have described the decision as an aggression against real piety and personal freedom and an act of terrorism against parents, who seek chastity for their girls." Claiming that the minister had "verbally" backed down on his decision, deputy Kamal Khalid called on the minister to make a decision in writing revoking his earlier decision and send it to schools, which abide by official written decisions only.

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OFFICIAL REITERATES ISLAMIC LINE, DENIES RIFT

Labor Party Secretary General 'Adil Husayn, in part of his approximately 900-word boxed comment on page 5, reacts to reports in the government press that "acute differences" exist within the Labor Party. Husayn explains that while "differences" within the party are "endless," this is a "reality that we handle with constant dialogue until we normally come to a consensus or a semi-unanimous decision." He points out that the differences are over "tactics" and not the general principles of the party. Outlining these principles, he adds: "We call for the implementation of the shari'ah as a basis for the nation's renaissance. For us the shari'ah is a religion for Muslims and a cultural heritage for Egyptians (Muslims and Christians)." Refuting reports in the government press about a "sharp collision" between him and party leader Ibrahim Shukri, he describes relations within the party leadership as "warm" and "brotherly," adding that this "particularly applies to the relationship between myself and big brother Ibrahim Shukri."

ISLAMIC SCHOLAR DEMANDS ACCESS TO MEDIA

Dr. Mahmud Himayah, professor of Islamic Call at the Asyut College of Theology, writes an approximately 2,000-word article entitled "An Open Letter to the President of the Republic" on page 9. In his article, Dr. Himayah points out that it is the duty of ulema to advise the rulers. Addressing the president, he writes: "The communists and atheists have taken advantage of your tolerance and started to deal blows to Islam. To them freedom is freedom of atheism and verbal attacks against sacred matters and religions." Explaining that in the past anti-Islamic criticism has been implicit and confined to individual cases, he adds: "But now, under your term, the enemies of the shari'ah have joined hands, combined their efforts, and made plans, after having reached influential positions in the state. We now see the audio, visual, and written media opening fire on Islam, its preachers, and symbols, under the pretext of combating extremism at one time, enlightenment another time, and freedom and democracy at other times." He refers to the president's "wise decision" to withdraw from the market books published by the government-owned Book Authority containing attacks against Islam. After citing a number books and articles in the press that he believes contain anti-Islamic material, Dr. Himayah writes: "Mr. President: Millions of Muslims, chief among them being al-Azhar, do not accept that the state let this reckless gang abuse the symbols of Islam and its ulema, singling them out for insults." He points out that the government's indifference to this campaign gives the impression that it "approves," not to say "encourages," these insults. Concluding his article, Dr. Himayah says: "The least to be expected from Egypt, the seat of al-Azhar, is to give the Islamic ulema and bearers of the noble shari'ah the same treatment given to the advocates of secularism, in terms of freedom of publication in the biggest and most widely-circulated newspapers, particularly the government press, so that a balance can be attained and the Islamic ulema can refute the false allegations raised by corrupt writers." He adds: "Will you kindly give us the same freedom of publishing and of expression in the official media given to the communists and secularists?"

BOOK VIEWS ISLAMIC GROUP'S VISION OF WEST

A seminar held at the Arab Islamic Center to discuss a book by writer Dr. Ibrahim al-Bayyumi Ghanim called "The West in the Eyes of the Islamic Movement" is summarized in an approximately 4,000-word report on page 9. The book describes the treatment of the West in the writings of leading figures from the Muslim Brotherhood, the Islamic Group, and the Jihad Organization. In the seminar, the book's author gives a brief account of his book and is followed by several researchers and scholars who comment on the book.

Palestinian Affairs

PFLP-GC: Participation in Gaza PNC 'Treason'

JN2308180494 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1630 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Statement by PFLP-GC; date not given]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

In reply to the Zionist enemy Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres' invitation to the Palestinian leaders, particularly Comrade Ahmad Jibril, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC], to attend the Palestine National Council's [PNC] meeting in Gaza, an official PFLP-GC spokesman has stated the following:

1. When we want to go to our country, we will not be in need of an invitation from anyone. Our road to Palestine will only be through martyrdom or with the conquerors' regiments.

2. This invitation is an implementation of the U.S.-Zionist will. Any participation in this PNC session will be tantamount to high treason. Our people know how to defend their rights and cause. Moreover, this invitation represents 'Arafat and his conspiracies. It is the first and last chapter in the conspiracy of striking at and liquidating the Palestine question.

On the other hand, we emphasize that any measure aimed at undermining our right in our land will be resisted by our people who refuse to bargain over their land under any circumstances.

The official PFLP-GC spokesman added: If 'Arafat accepted to enter Gaza and Jericho under the spears of the Zionist enemy and the occupation's flag, we say that we do not belong to such capitulators. The Palestinians who were expelled from their homeland in 1948 and

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1967 do not need an invitation from the enemy which usurped our land which we will, God willing, enter as conquerors and liberators. This is a suspect invitation whose objective is to annul the PLO Charter which represents our Palestinian people's aspirations.

The official PFLP-GC spokesman said that any invitation which includes such an agenda is a flagrant violation. Anyone who accepts this invitation does not represent our people. The true path lies in the escalation of armed struggle and the perpetuation of the intifadah. As we can see now, the Zionist offers which are being presented to the Lebanese Government on withdrawal from southern Lebanon within a few months would not have been made had it not been for the Lebanese and Islamic resistance struggle and jihad in southern Lebanon. This is our opinion, stand, and path. The only language we know is the language of jihad and armed struggle.

[Signed] The PFLP-GC

Jibril Rejects Call To Amend PLO Charter

NC2308192094 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Report by correspondent Muhammad Bishkar in Beirut]

[Text] Mr. Ahmad Jibril, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC], has categorically rejected the cancellation of the Palestinian National Charter's articles which call for the elimination of the State of Israel. He affirmed that the Charter is the framework and program which the Palestinian people follow and which binds them together. Neither 'Arafat nor anyone else can erase from the minds of these people the dreams of struggling to liberate Palestine. He believes that amending the National Charter as the Zionist enemy wants means admitting that over 90 percent of Palestinian land belongs to the Zionists.

In an exclusive interview with the radio and television of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jibril noted that he rejects the invitation Shim'on Peres extended to him to visit the Gaza Strip to participate in the Palestine National Council meeting to amend the Charter. He said it is ridiculous that the enemy, which has usurped our land, is inviting us to visit our own country. He believes that Peres' call has many meanings, one of which is that Peres feels a great danger to himself and to his usurping entity from the Palestinian mujahidin movement who reject the traitorous agreements he signed with the PLO. Jibril adds:

[Begin Jibril recording] We are not among those people who enter Palestine under the Zionist yoke of oppression and the Zionist flag. We will enter Palestine sooner or later, God willing, by liberating it and after defeating the occupation forces. [end recording]

PFLP-GC, Hizballah Leaders Emphasize Resistance

JN2308201194 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1630 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] Leading a delegation from the Political Bureau of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC], PFLP-GC Secretary General Ahmad Jibril met a Lebanese Hizballah delegation comprising Hasan Nasrallah, Hizballah secretary general, and a number of Hizballah leaders. The PFLP-GC delegation comprised Talal Naji, PFLP-GC assistant secretary general; Fadl Shururu, secretary of the PFLP-GC Political Bureau; and 'Umar al-Shihabi, member of the PFLP-GC Political Bureau.

During the meeting, discussions dealt with the situation in the Palestinian and Lebanese arenas and the dangers posed to our Arab nation. Viewpoints were identical. The conferees condemned the treasonous Gaza-Jericho agreement and its consequences. They stressed continued jihad, armed struggle, and resistance.

Prominent Figures Reject PNC Meeting in Gaza

JN2308130294 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 23 Aug 94 pp 1, 22

[Text] Following contacts and consultations, a statement has been issued by 171 Palestinian figures—including heads and members of the Palestine National Council [PNC], PLO Central Council, and the PLO Executive Committee, as well as a number of prominent intellectuals—criticizing what was described as commitments by Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, to call for a PNC meeting in Gaza in order to scrap some clauses in the PLO Charter. The clauses deny Israel the right to exist and conflict with the commitments contained in the Washington Declaration of Principles and in the joint statement issued by 'Arafat and Rabin in Paris on 7 July 1994.

The figures noted that the contacts included all Palestinian resistance factions in the PNC, including both those that supported and those that disapproved of the PNC resolutions adopted at the Algiers meeting on 15 November 1988. The statement said that all those who were contacted rejected infringement on the PLO Charter. They also rejected the call to hold a PNC meeting in the Gaza confine [mahjaz] or in any other self-rule confine. They said they disapproved of and denounced the Declaration of Principles—the Oslo agreement—and its results as well as the subsequent agreements between Israel and what they described as "Arafat's team." The statement noted that some factions chose not to sign the statement for reasons related to their political programs or for personal organizational reasons.

In the statement, which was delivered to reporters yesterday, the figures said that the power of Yasir 'Arafat, in

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his capacity as chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, was neutralized by the suspension of PLO Executive Committee meetings, due to the absence of the necessary quorum, even before the formation of the self-rule authority. 'Arafat has no right to exercise any of the PLO Executive Committee prerogatives, the statement said.

Citing reasons beyond their control, the Palestinian figures apologized for not being able to hold a news conference in which Ibrahim Bakr, Taysir Qub'ah, and Hani al-Hasan were scheduled to take part and during which they were supposed to distribute their statement today, Tuesday.

Following are the names of the signatories to the statement:

Ibrahim Bakr Ibrahim; Ibrahim al-Hajj Hasan; Ibrahim al-Khatib; Ibrahim al-'Itir; Ibrahim al-Fityani; Abu-Nidal al-Ashqar; Ahmad al-Jamal; Ahmad Dahbur; Ahmad al-Sa'di; Ahmad Salih Muslih; Dr. Ahmad Sidqi al-Dajani; Dr. Ahmad Kan'an; Ahmad al-Yamani; Dr. Edward Said; Dr. Usamah al-Naqib; Ishaq Amin Yunis; Shaykh As'ad Bayyud al-Tamimi; Mrs. Asma' Khadir; Amin Qub'ah; Mrs. Intisar Mar'i; Mrs. In'am 'Abd-al-Hadi; Dr. Anis al-Sayigh; Dr. Anis Fawzi Qasim; Bassam al-Shak'ah; Bashir Ahmad al-Khayri; Bilal al-Shakhshir; Bahjat Abu-Gharbiyah; Taysir Khalid (Muhammad 'Awdah); Taysir Qub'ah; Tha'ir 'Abd-al-Rahim; Jabr Yusif Alunah; Jamil Salamah; Jamil Muhammad Majdalawi; Dr. Jamil Maraqah; Jawad 'Aql; Jawad Yunis; Dr. George Habash; Hasib al-Sabbagh; Dr. Husayn Abu-al-Naml; Husayn Huraythan; Hamad al-Hijjawi; Hamdi Matar; Hana Qahhat; Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi; Khalid al-Durzi; Khalid 'Abd-al-Majid; Khalid al-'Awad; Khalid al-Fahum; Dawud Talhami; Dawud Muraghah (Abu-Ahmad Fu'ad); Darwish Mustafa Hasan Dawud; Dhiyab Khadir Mar'i; Ribhi Hallum; Mrs. Rasmiyah 'Awdah; Rashad Abu-Shawar; Rif'at al-Nimr; Dr. Riyad al-Maliki; Dr. Riyad Mansur; Mrs. Rima Nazzal; Dr. Ziyad Dib; Jihad Mikha'il; Dr. Zakariya al-Nahhas; Zuhayr Khalil; Saji Salamah; Salim Abu-Khalil; Mrs. Sa'adah al-Kilani; Sa'id Busaysu; Dr. Samih Farsun; Mrs. Samihah Khalil; Dr. Samir Haddad; Samir 'Abduh; Sulayman Husayn al-Ka'kuri; Shihadah 'Isa Ghannam; Shafiq al-Hut; Salih al- Barghuthi; Salih Zaydan; Sabir Muhyi-al-Din; Dr. Sabri Ka'wash; Subhi Taha; Dr. Salah-al-Din al-Dabbagh; Salah Salah; Dr. Salah al-Hawwari; Taha al-'Abd; Zafir al-Khadra; 'Abid 'Ubayd al-Zuray'i; 'Adil Samarah; 'Abbas Zaki; 'Abd-al-Jabbar Abu-Gharbiyah; 'Abd-al-Hamid Abu-Ghawsh; Shaykh 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Sa'ih; 'Abd-al-Rahim Malluh; 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Hajj Ahmad; 'Abd al-Rahman Hamdan; 'Abd al-Rahman Kittanah; 'Abd Raja Sarhan; Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid al-Tayih; 'Abd-al-'Aziz Ahmad; Dr. 'Abd-al-'Alim Da'na; 'Abdallah Hammudah; Mrs. 'Ablah Abu-'Ulbah; Mrs. 'Ablah Shamiyah; 'Adnan al-Sabah; 'Izzat Milhim al-Lahham; Mrs. 'Isam 'Abd-al-Hadi; Dr. 'Isam al-Tahir; 'Ata Isma'il al-Khatib; 'Ali al-Shihabi; 'Ali Abu-Hilal; 'Ali 'Abd-al-Malik; 'Ali 'Aziz; 'Ali Muhammad 'Ali al-Sharif; 'Ulayyan 'Ulayyan; 'Imad Hijjawi; 'Imad al-Dik; 'Umar Qutaysh; 'Anan al-'Amiri; 'Awdah al-Rantisi; Ghazi al-Surani; Ghazi al-Kuz; Dr. Fayiz Rashid Hilal; Mrs. Fayizah Abu-al-Hayja'; Mrs. Firyal Sa'id al-Shaykh Salim; Fu'ad 'Abdallah Yusuf; Dr. Fu'ad al-Mughrabi; Dr. Fawzi al-Asmar; Fahd al-Rimawi; Kamal al-Nimri; Kayid Shihadah al-Ghul; Dr. Labib Qamhawi; Mrs. Lutfiyah Hawari; Mrs. Layla Khalid; Ma'mun al-Sayyid; Mazin Riyal; Dr. Mahir al-Tahir; Muhammad Abu-Mayzar; Muhammad Jadallah; Muhammad Hasan Milhim; Muhammad Dhib al-Maslami; Muhammad Sa'id Murad; Muhammad Shakir 'Uwaynat; Muhammad 'Abdallah 'Abd-al-Rahman Dawud; Muhammad Qaddurah; Muhammad Nawfal; Mahmud Ibrahim Fannun; Mahmud Abu-Hantash; Mahmud Barakah; Mahmud Tayyim; Mahmud Hamdan; Mahmud al-'Asi; Mustafa Khamis; Mustafa al-Zibri; Mustafa Malhis; Minwir al-Rimawi; Mu'ayyad al-'Attili; Mrs. Mayy al-Sayigh; Shaykh Nadir As'ad al-Tamimi; Nasir Naffa'; Nayif Hawatimah; Dr. Nusayr 'Aruri; Dr. Nizam 'Assaf; Nazim Fa'ur; Mrs. Nihayah Muhammad; Hashim 'Abd-al-Hadi; Hani al-Hasan; Dr. Hisham al-Sharabi; Wahid al-Hamdallah; Walid 'Abd-al-Hadi; Yahya Hammudah; Dr. Yusuf Sammur; Dr. Yusuf 'Abd-al-Haqq; and Yunus 'Abd Taha.

PNC Speaker on Conditions for Convening Session

JN2408082694 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 24 Aug 94 p 19

[Text] Amman, QUDS PRESS—Salim al-Za'nun, acting speaker of the Palestine National Council [PNC] has said that certain issues should be considered before calling for a new session of the PNC, which is a sort of PLO parliament.

In a statement to QUDS PRESS, al-Za'nun said the first of these issues is spreading Palestinian authority to all occupied territories, including east Jerusalem.

Palestinian and Israeli negotiators had agreed to delay discussing the future of east Jerusalem until the negotiations on the final status, which are due to begin after two years.

Al-Za'nun, who is a Central Committee member of the Palestine National Liberation Movement (Fatah), the biggest PLO faction, added that among other considerations, all PNC members should come to the occupied territories as citizens and not as visitors, in reference to statements by Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres that Israel would allow PNC members to enter the self-rule areas in the Gaza Strip to discuss the removal of certain clauses in the Palestinian charter, which is a sort of a PLO constitution.

Al-Za'nun rejected the idea of working out an agenda for the PNC before it is convened, and said that when the subject of abolishing clauses of the charter is presented to the council, the council will be the only party to decide on this.

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Meanwhile, al-Za'nun denied charges by those opposed to convening of council that he prevented them from holding a news conference at the PNC headquarters last evening.

He said that these people, most of whom are from Palestinian factions opposed to the self-rule agreement, have not completed the necessary procedures for holding the news conference, and have not notified the concerned quarters, saying: We are not against any memorandum.

Those opposed to the convening of the council presented a memorandum to the PNC speakership signed by 171 PNC members. The memorandum rejects the convening of a PNC session in the self-rule areas in the Gaza Strip to discuss amending the charter.

PNC Speaker Reportedly To Return Within 2 Weeks

TA2308172794 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Announcer-read report]

[Text] Informed Palestinian sources have told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that shaykh 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Sa'ih, speaker of the Palestine National Council [PNC], informed Yasir 'Arafat in a hand-written letter that he will return to the territories from Amman within two weeks.

Al-Husayni Seeks 'Positive' Steps Prior to PNC

TA2408053394 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Studio interview with Faysal al-Husayni by anchorman Hayim Yavin and Arab affairs correspondent Ehud Ya'ari—live]

[Text] [Yavin] A good evening to Mr. Faysal al-Husayni and to our Arab affairs correspondent Ehud Ya'ari. Mr. Al-Husayni, you just heard Likud Knesset Member David Levi who called on the Israeli Government to immediately halt the negotiations with the PLO. Why is the abrogation of the Palestinian Charter taking so long? There is even an attempt to organize opposition to this repeal. After all the PLO made a commitment to this effect in the Oslo agreement.

[Al-Husayni] Look, it is premature to say that a third of the members of the Palestine National Council [PNC] oppose this change. That is only the case if we attempt to do this today. It is true that a third of the members, or perhaps even more, can say no. However, if this comes after the peace agreement shows the Palestinians that the Israelis also want to make peace and close the files on everything pertaining to the war then the entire situation will change. One cannot say that there is peace with everyone except the prisoners; or that all the prisoners can be released with the exception of those who have blood on their hands. This proves that the Israelis have also not fully accepted the idea of peace. Some Palestinians also refuse to internalize this concept. Therefore, both sides must first prove to their own people as well as to the other side that the war is over.

[Ya'ari] Mr. Al-Husayni, you were in Tunis with Yasir 'Arafat at a meeting of the leadership. After your meeting there, at least two of the participants, Faruq Qaddumi and Sakhr Habash, said that a decision had been made that the PNC would not amend the Palestinian Charter before Israel recognized an independent Palestinian state or in other words only after an agreement had been reached on the permanent arrangement in the territories. Is that indeed the case?

[Al-Husayni] Look, it was not an official meeting with all the PNC members, only some members participated. We talked, but nothing was officially decided.

[Ya'ari] So what is your position now? When will the moment come?

[Yavin] Are you actually demanding that Israel take additional steps; for example, with regard to the Palestinian prisoners before you even convene the PNC?

[Al-Husayni] No, no. What we want is for the PNC to convene in the wake of some positive developments. If I want support from more than two thirds of the members I need something positive, I need to be able to show some tangible achievements in order to persuade those members who are not yet convinced. Now, let me tell you something. If we want to tell the Palestinians that we have achieved full peace with Israel then there must be no more files. If we want to close the file on the Palestinian Charter then the Israelis must close other files. For example, 180 PNC delegates should come from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. If we hold elections and elect 180 delegates from these areas then I believe the entire situation will change.

[Yavin] Let us move on to another issue. The agreement on early empowerment is about to be signed. The question is whether the PLO is ready to assume responsibility for education, welfare, and health issues?

[Al-Husayni] Yes, we are prepared. The issue of taxation and its enforcement presents a problem.

[Yavin] Tax enforcement is a problem for everyone.

[Al-Husayni] Yes, that is why we would like this to take place in conjunction with the withdrawal of the Israeli Army and the assumption of responsibility by the Palestinian police in these areas. We would like the Palestinian police to be in charge of tax enforcement. However, we nevertheless believe that the Palestinian people will take the necessary steps and pay their taxes to the Palestinian Authority without any problem.

[Ya'ari] I would like to ask you a question that many people on both the Palestinian and Israeli sides are asking. Are you happy with the functioning of the

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Palestinian Authority so far and with that of its chairman, Yasir 'Arafat. Has he proven successful as the administrator of the population's daily affairs?

[Al-Husayni] Look, even if four, five, or six months have passed, we are still at the beginning and many things have yet to be done. We are starting from zero. When I look at our situation now, and compare it with that of Israel in 1949, I see that you also had your share of problems then. We have problems now but things are making progress.

[Yavin] Thank you very much, Mr. al-Husayni and correspondent Ehud Ya'ari.

Qaddumi Denies Remarks on Destruction of Israel

JN2308204094 London AL-WASAT in Arabic 22-28 Aug 94 pp 4, 5

[Telephone interview with Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, by an unidentified AL-WASAT correspondent; place and date not given]

[Text] [AL-WASAT] Rabin described your speech in Algiers in which you talked about "destroying Israel" as a violation of the agreement with his government. What is your reply?

[Qaddumi] Yitzhaq Rabin's statement was an attempt to pressure and blackmail the Palestinian side. We joined the peace process, and we are committed to it in accordance with its bases; namely, implementing the Security Council resolutions, and regaining the land in exchange for peace. We still say that our people have the right to continue their resistance as long as there is occupation of our territories.

I have frequently reiterated my reservations about the concluded agreements because they belittle the Palestinian people's rights acknowledged by international legitimacy. We demand implementation of what the international resolutions approved for us as well as the removal of settlements according to Security Council Resolution 465, and withdrawal from Jerusalem, whose annexation was illegal according to Resolution 478.

The Zionist media try to distort words in order to find justifications for imposing their own translation of these incomplete agreements. Our people, however, will continue to wage struggle with all their strength to regain their rights and establish an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. The Palestine National Council [PNC] approved the establishment of this state. As a PNC member and the foreign minister of Palestine, the PNC chose me to protect and implement its decisions as long as I am committed to these decisions.

[AL-WASAT] President 'Arafat, however, said your statements, which called for the destruction of Israel, did not represent the PLO's view.

[Qaddumi] This is the PLO's position.

[AL-WASAT] Does this mean that there are differences between you and Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat]?

[Qaddumi] President 'Arafat cited "the destruction of Israel." I did not say the destruction of Israel. I only said this state was forcibly established in history.

[AL-WASAT] But the Israeli News Agency cited you as saying that "there is a state which was established by force and that should be destroyed."

[Qaddumi] I did not say destroy it. I only said this is a state which was forcibly established in history and that it will end exactly as other entities came to an end. The Israeli newspaper DAVAR indicated in one of its 1991 issues that Israel is a small exhausted state that does not have natural resources and that it is a burden which the United States inherited from the past.

[AL-WASAT] What about the Central Committee meetings, which you recently chaired in Tunis?

[Qaddumi] The committee met under my chairmanship to discuss organizational and financial issues, especially since many PLO institutions, elements, and cadres did not receive their pay for some time. We also discussed a number of issues related to enhancing our Arab relations, particularly with Syria and Jordan.

[AL-WASAT] What is the story of the document which you obtained from Peres on Jerusalem?

[Qaddumi] In October last year, I told late Norwegian Foreign Minister Holst that if Shim'on Peres did not sign this pledge I would announce that this was the first violation of the agreement. Peres immediately signed this pledge and sent it to Abu-'Ammar. When Rabin met with Christopher during the latter's tour before the last and told him that not a single word was mentioned about Jerusalem in the 13 September agreement, I wrote to the U.S. secretary of state and the Russian foreign minister saying that Rabin was lying because there was a pledge signed by Peres and that if they did not announce this pledge I would announce it.

[AL-WASAT] Since the Palestinian-Israeli agreement was signed, have you been requested to meet with Israeli officials, and have you rejected such meetings?

[Qaddumi] I was asked to do so but I refused. I said clearly that Israel should recognize, in principle, the refugees' right to repatriation. Thus, there is no possibility for such contacts unless Israel acknowledges the refugees' right to repatriation following a comprehensive [Israeli] withdrawal.

[AL-WASAT] All the refugees or half of them?

[Qaddumi] All of them; I mean the 1948 refugees. This is the basic task of the PLO's Political Department.

[AL-WASAT] What is the reason for 'Arafat's despair?

[Qaddumi] The situation in the occupied territories.

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[AL-WASAT] Do you always contact him and coordinate with him?

[Qaddumi] I am in constant touch with brother Yasir 'Arafat.

'Arafat Deputy Reportedly To Settle in Ramallah

TA2408111994 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 24 Aug 94 pp 1, 2

[Report by Hemi Shalev]

[Text] Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas], PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's deputy and one of the architects of the Oslo agreement between the PLO and Israel, is scheduled to arrive in the territories next week and settle in Ramallah, which is located outside the Palestinian self-rule areas.

Senior political sources yesterday expressed great satisfaction with Abu-Mazin's decision. The sources assessed that Abu-Mazin would have a serious and positive influence on the Palestinian Authority, and strengthen the self-government's commitment to fulfill its obligations toward Israel. The sources said that Abu- Mazin's arrival in the territories signifies his reinstatement within the first rank of Palestinian leaders after a period of "isolation" due to severe differences of opinion with Yasir 'Arafat.

Abu-Mazin is not an official member of the Palestinian Authority and is therefore not obligated to conduct his business from Gaza or Jericho. He intends to settle in Ramallah in order to help implement the Palestinian Authority's plans which pertain to the whole of the West Bank.

Hamas Leader Says Arrests Would Harm 'Unity'

TA2308172694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] Shaykh Muhsin Abu-'Aytah, one of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] leaders in the Gaza Strip, said that if the Palestinian police arrested the members of the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam squads, it would harm the unity of the Palestinian people and most of the public would cease supporting the autonomy authorities.

Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem notes that these remarks came in reaction to statements made by Nasr Yusuf, the commander of the Palestinian police, who asserted that his men were capable of capturing 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam squads if the PLO gave them instructions to this effect.

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Algeria

National Dialogue Talks Commented On

Socialist Party Rejects Talks

LD2308203994 Paris Radio France International in French 1830 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Report by Tahar Mejdoub in Algiers]

[Text] Yesterday the Algerian president suggested to the legal opposition movements that they should take part in all the transitional institutions. He also called on them to meet the imprisoned leaders of the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] in order to convince them to rally the transition.

The Socialist Forces Front's [FFS] answer came today, and Acting Secretary Genera Said Khelil has rejected General Zeroual's proposal:

[Begin Khelil recording] The authorities are far from having achieved the necessary consensus for the consolidation of the new political and social order as it has been announced.

This situation has been made worse by the exacerbation and the generalization of violence. Everyone agreeds that this violence may last, thus making any negotiated solution increasingly unlikely.

One then understands that the combination of all these factors has compelled the authorities to renounce dialogue. In fact, this is one of many attempts to consolidate the institutional system that has been set up. This is a genuine security doctrine which can only lead to authoritarian institutions. There is no democratic transition, and there is no desire to have the authorities and the opposition govern together.

Furthermore, the exclusive link between the restoration of security and the organization of elections makes the very organization of these elections uncertain.

For the FFS, participation in the dialogue is unacceptable in such circumstances. [end recording]

Spokesman on Dialogue

LD2408080594 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1932 GMT 23 Aug 94

["Special" interview with Mihoub Mihoubi, spokesman of the presidency, by correspondent Said Menaa; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Announcer] As we promised you during this bulletin, ladies and gentlemen, here follows a special interview containing the clarifications of the official spokesman of the presidency of state, Mr. Mihoub Mihoubi, on the first round of dialogue. The interview is conducted by colleague Said Menaa.

[Menaa] Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to this program, the first round of national dialogue took place on 21 August between the head of state and five political parties. We host today Mr Mihoub Mihoubi, adviser of the head of state and official spokesman of the presidency, so he can give us the details of that meeting.

Your Excellency, at the beginning, why dialogue and why now?

[Mihoubi] Naturally as you know, we have been living in a transitional period for a while. This transitional period is a stage of institutions—i.e., elected institutions that have legitimacy will be set up during this stage. Thus, dialogue is a framework for consultations in order to achieve these aims. The regime is eager to get the participation of all the political forces in this dialogue.

[Menaa] Mr Mihoubi, five parties participated in the first stage of the dialogue while others boycotted it, i.e. the Socialist Forces' Front [FFS], the Rally for Culture and Democracy [RCD], and Ettahadi. First, what impression did the participating parties get and second, what is the regime's stance towards the parties that boycotted this round?

[Mihoubi] We also noticed the reactions of these parties after the first round and I believe their reactions are positive, as it was agreed that dialogue should be continuous and God willing, we will embark tomorrow upon the second round of this series of dialogues, which we want to be continuous.

With regard to the parties that have not responded to the invitation addressed by the head of state, as far as we are concerned, the door will remain open to these national political forces. They should assess the situation and join the dialogue when they see it fit. We are still in continuous contact with them and our wish is that all the national political forces contribute in this decisive phase of the national dialogue for reconciliation in order to go through this transitional stage in the best conditions and hand over the leadership of the country to those who will be elected legitimately by the people.

[Menaa] Your Excellency, you mentioned the word continuous in your answer. Does this mean that dialogue will take place in continuous rounds or just in rounds [as heard].

[Mihoubi] This dialogue, as seen by the president of the republic, is continuous. It is a dialogue between the sons of Algeria and concerns sensitive national issues. Therefore, we think this dialogue should remain open and continuous, so all the national forces that are concerned with the interests of Algeria and carry out their political action within the framework of the constitution and the republican laws... [pauses] This is our view on the continuity of dialogue.

[Menaa] Your Excellency, you also mentioned—all the political forces. Is the news about forming a party committee to contact the dissolved FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] leadership true?

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[Mihoubi] I think this news item is untrue. All there is to it is, as happened in the past and one should recall this, all sorts of encouragements were given to all political forces that wished to contact the representatives of the dissolved party should their wish be accepted [by this party]. Therefore, no one entrusted them to do so; however, the authority sees no obstacle in any contact that might be beneficial to the national dialogue and might contribute to the national reconciliation.

[Menaa] Mr Mihoubi, what are the conditions for participating in the dialogue?

[Mihoubi] As you know, his excellency the head of state stressed that the conditions of dialogue are in reality easy and not difficult for one who effectively wants to put the interest of the country above any consideration.

These conditions consist only in abiding by the provisions of the Constitution and the laws of the republic and naturally rejecting violence as a means of practicing political rights and power struggle.

Every civilized society and every developed society has its laws and political action has its rules, which are the Constitution and the various statutes that regulate political life in every country. Naturally, if we take that for granted, then these conditions are easy. I believe these conditions are reasonable and logical and we hope that all the political forces abide by legitimacy and include themselves in this framework in their political action so we can guarantee this country development in the aegis of stability, calm, security, and reassurance.

[Menaa] Mr. Mihoubi, the management of the transitional phase was among the subjects raised during the first round of the dialogue. Participation of the parties in the management of the transitional phase was discussed too.

[Mihoubi] There is a strong concern and desire to make sure the participation of all political forces are committed to the disciplines that have been announced several times—respect for the republic's constitution and laws, rejection of terrorism in all its forms, actual and serious participation in the establishment of transitional institutions that will prepare the climate and place all means and capabilities for returning society to its normal situation and restoring the democratic path to its correct course. The door is open for participation in all institutions, including the government, as the head of state reaffirmed.

[Menaa] Does this mean that the idea of a coalition government is under discussion now?

[Mihoubi] At the present time, there is no discussion at all about any government. We are at the beginning of a national dialogue. This idea will be crystallized during the dialogue. We hope to abridge the road so that we can shorten the transitional phase. The head of state personally desires this—to see this transitional phase shrink as much as possible and to lay down all the necessary conditions from the security, administration, procedural, and other points of view so that assurance to the people, stability, security can be restored, as well as all the necessary conditions for holding elections in which the final word shall rest with the people in total freedom and transparency. The subject of transparency brings back to mind the fact that there is an urgent desire by the head of state that this national dialogue should also be transparent dialogue. In other words, the people will be informed step by step about the progress of the dialogue with total sincerity and in total transparency.

[Menaa] All the parties are calling for the freedom of political and information activity. What are are the decisions taken in this respect?

[Mihoubi] There is no decision concerning the dialogue itself, but during this dialogue and on the strength of the questions of the political formations taking part in this dialogue, the head of state reaffirmed his eagerness to commitment to the constitution's provisions that guarantees the freedom of political and information activity of the legal parties active in the country. Therefore, all confirmations have been given to the participating parties, and I believe that the statement issued yesterday was clear. A presidential directive is also going to be issued clarifying and confirming this. The political parties have been asked to inform the presidency about anything liable to impede political activity of the legal political groups, and this applies also to information.

[Menaa] Mr. Mihoubi, yesterday's statement spoke about abuses recorded, and about the head of state affirming that there would be punishment of those who committed them. What about this?

[Mihoubi] True, now and again we hear about abuses, etc., and I want only to recall that the head of state has affirmed that the government and security activity is conducted legally, and that he is very keen to follow up all issues brought to his attention with decisive proof, because we want to be a state of law, and therefore these abuses must be dealt with in an orderly and legal framework, and with legal means. In this respect, the head of state also affirmed his personal following-up of this issue, and he asked the political parties and all the groups that care for the rights of society and human rights, as he did last March, to inform him about impediments to political activities. We are trying to build a civilized society where law prevails.

[Menaa] Some Western media and some papers spoke about an external pressure on the Algerian authority to organize elections as soon as possible. How accurate is this news?

[Mihoubi] As a matter of fact, this is a strange matter as far as a people who sacrificed 1.5 million of its sons to restore its sovereignty and self-respect as well as its freedom of decision. Thirty years after the attainment of national independence we hear such tunes. This is strange as far as the Algerian people are concerned. I

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strongly deny this news. Regrettably, this tendentious news is being reiterated even in Algeria, and sometimes through Algerian pens and words. The authority has total conviction that it is going through a transitional phase. At this transitional phase the final word will be for the people, and any decision shall be taken by Algerians who are concerned about their country's interests, sovereignty, and dignity.

[Menaa] From your words, Mr. Mihoubi, one can have the feeling that the country is to have elections soon. Has a timetable for these elections been dealt with by the parties, and what is their nature?

[Mihoubi] As you know, we will start the second round of the dialogue tomorrow, and consequently, we will deal with these issues. Thus, all these issues are open to discussion, and no decision will take place without the participation of the political forces participating in the dialogue.

[Menaa] Thank you, Mr. Mihoubi for accepting this invitation. Thank you and goodbye.

FIS: Free Leaders Before Talks

AU2408073194 Paris AFP in English 2059 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] Bonn, Aug 23 (AFP)—The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), which is battling the military-backed regime in Algeria, said Tuesday [23 August] it would not enter talks with the regime unless its jailed leaders are freed.

"The FIS has no intention of starting negotiations inside a prison," one of the leaders of FIS abroad told AFP here.

The FIS official said its leaders in prison should be freed to meet with FIS members "who have gone underground or into exile, and those in the military and political wings of the movement."

The FIS source said the movement should be legalised and allowed "serious negotiations in complete liberty and in the full view of the press."

Algerian President Liamine Zeroual met leaders of five authorised opposition parties Sunday for talks and urged them to meet the jailed leaders of FIS for talks in order to convince them to join negotiations.

However, he said that before they could be allowed to join the talks, the FIS leaders would have to "adhere publicly" to the fundamental principles of non-violence, respect for the constitution and political pluralism.

"The government has already made a nonsense of all of these conditions many times," the FIS leader said.

"It is the military regime which is refusing to allow a change in power, which eliminated democracy and made a mockery of the constitution.

The military had started the violence in Algeria, he said. The fundamentalists have been leading a campaign of violence against the government since the military intervened in January 1992 to cancel the second round of elections the FIS was poised to win.

Thousands of people, many of them civilians, have died in the conflict.

FLN Rejects Meeting Jailed FIS Leaders

LD2408105094 Paris Radio France International in French 0630 GMT 24 Aug 94

[Text] The secretary-general of the FLN [National Liberation Front], the former single party [in Algeria], will not meet with the leaders of the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] who are currently imprisoned. Such a meeting, called for by President Zeroual, is devoid of interest as long as the authorities only can decide whether the FIS will be associated with or excluded from national dialogue, the FLN announced.

Parties, Presidency Start 2d Round

LD2408094794 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0900 GMT 24 Aug 94

[Text] About an hour ago the second round of the national dialogue between the presidency and the political parties started.

The meeting is attended by the five political parties that participated in the last round of dialogue held 21 August. They are: National Liberation Front, Movement for Democracy in Algeria, Hamas Movement, Ennahda Movement, and Renewal Party.

This meeting is the second of its kind in less than a week.

Cherif: Assassinations Against 'Spirit of Islam'

LD2308142094 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] Speaking about the tragic conditions the country is experiencing, Interior and Local Authorities Minister Abderrahmane Meziane Cherif has said that the tragedy in Algeria is a daily one—the shedding of Algerians' blood, the burning of schools, and the destruction of factories and public institutions.

According to Mr. Cherif a scorched earth policy is being implemented. The interior minister considers these acts to be employed as a way of coming to power, but he made it clear that Islam is not the issue. He said that Islam is for everyone, but the issue here is power.

Ansering a question on the assassination of foreign nationals, Mr. Cherif stressed that the assassinations perpetrated against our guests and our citizens are against the spirit of Islam, and that the aim of these acts is to isolate Algeria. He pointed out that friendly countries still trust and cooperate with Algeria within a framework of mutual interests.

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Speaking on the duty of his ministry to restore prestige to the administration, Mr. Cherif made it clear that this is not the only aspiration of the Interior Ministry. The ministry's task is to make the municipality a sphere for democratic activities for the citizen by restoring the role of the municipality as a basic cell in political, economic, and social life.

Sixteen 'Terrorists' Killed Over Weekend

LD2308192394 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Excerpts] On Saturday and Sunday, many educational institutions were subjected to arson and sabotage in many areas of the homeland. In Blida, much sabotage by conventional explosives took place on Saturday night, targetting the technical secondary school in the Kazem quarter in Larbaa', the Elbatani secondary school, and the Ben Chercheli intermediate school, as well as a library containing 3000 books. In Chlef, two primary schools and a vocational training center were set on fire, as well as a municipal library, an intermediate school administrative complex, and three vehicles including two trucks belonging to the municipality. [passage omitted]

The security organs today announced that the security forces have terminated the activities of 16 terrorists during the past two days in various operations at Ain Defla, Sidi Bel-Abbes, Mostghanem, and Skikda. [Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic at 1800 GMT on 23 August reports: "In the context of the fight against terrorism, 16 terrorists are reported to have been killed in various regions of the country during the past 72 hours."]

Egypt

Foreign Minister Confers With Sudanese Ambassador

NC2408100994 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0848 GMT 24 Aug 94

[Text] Cairo, 24 Aug (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa today met Sudan's new Ambassador to Cairo Ahmad al-Tayyib al-Kurdufani.

Afterward al-Kurdufani said he presented Musa with a copy of his credentials. He added that he also relayed greetings from Sudanese Foreign Minister Dr. Husayn Sulayman Abu-Salih and a message conveying Sudan's eagerness to receive 'Amr Musa in Khartoum when he attends the meeting of the ministerial committee established by President Husni Mubarak and Sudanese leader 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir to solve problems between the two countries.

The Sudanese ambassador stated that the recent escalation between the two countries can be resolved if Musa and Abu-Salih meet in Khartoum. He said he explained this to Musa.

He added that Musa promised to meet Abu-Salih, if not in Khartoum, because he is currently preoccupied, then later in Cairo on the sidelines of the Arab League Council meeting in September. He said Musa told him that he and Abu-Salih would review the agenda for their meetings in Khartoum, which will include points designed "to rearrange Egyptian-Sudanese affairs."

Al-Kurdufani concluded his statement by noting that the problems the Sudanese Embassy in Cairo faced previously are now over.

Teachers Return From Sudan, Note 'Bad Treatment'

NC1808161494 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1440 GMT 18 Aug 94

[Text] Cairo, 18 Aug (MENA)—Some 23 teachers who worked in the Egyptian-Arab Community School in Sudan returned to Cairo today.

They returned because of a decision made by the Egyptian Ministry of Education following major excesses and bad treatment directed against them by the Sudanese authorities.

The returnees, representing all members of the educational mission in the school, said on their arrival that the Sudanese authorities treated them very badly.

They described the Sudanese authorities' treatment of the Egyptian Embassy staff as extremely bad.

They noted that the counselor of the Egyptian Embassy, fearing harassment by the authorities, has not left his house for many days.

The teachers said that they were surprised on Tuesday to see a Sudanese police force commanded by a brigadier general ordering them to vacate their homes and rest houses within two hours. They said the police did not allow them to take their personal effects.

The returnees said members of the Egyptian irrigation mission have also been subjected to provocative measures by the Sudanese authorities.

One of the returnees, Muhammad Sa'd Ahmad, said the Sudanese youths are being mobilized against Egypt. He pointed out that Sudanese media have been engaged in constant hostile campaigns against Egypt.

Sudanese Government's 'Provocation' Viewed

NC2408081194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0607 GMT 24 Aug 94

[Text] Cairo, 24 Aug (MENA)—Editorials published by the newspapers AL-AHRAM and AL-AKHBAR on Wednesday point out that the Khartoum rulers' continuing provocation against Egypt is unique in international relations and violates diplomatic norms, charters, and conventions.

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AL-AHRAM lists the continuing episodes of provocation that the Khartoum government perpetrates against Egyptian interests in Sudan, including cutting water, electricity, and telephone services from the Egyptian Embassy, its consular section, and military attache's office and issuing ultimatums to the Egyptian consul and two attaches to evacuate their residences on the pretext that these buildings were originally appropriated only for the use of the Egyptian military during the days of Anglo-Egyptian rule.

The newspaper says that Egypt could have retaliated against the Sudanese Embassy in Cairo but did not, out of its desire to safeguard the historically fraternal ties between the Egyptian and Sudanese nations. And Egypt does not wish to sever its bond with Sudan, although this is now tenuous.

AL-AHRAM concludes its comment with a question: How long can this bond be preserved while the Sudanese regime continues its inflammatory, provocative actions?

AL-AKHBAR says Egypt is above retaliating against the Sudanese regime's provocation, noting that it is restraining itself not for the sake of Sudan's current rulers—who came to power only because of adverse circumstances—but for the sake of the Sudanese people. The paper says Egypt wishes to spare the Sudanese people the effects of any Egyptian retaliation against al-Turabi and al-Bashir's gangster-like [baltajah] actions.

The newspaper notes that the Sudanese regime's impudent provocation increased following the scandalous disclosure that the international terrorist Carlos enjoyed the Sudanese rulers' hospitality for months. This provocative attitude, AL-AKHBAR notes, was spurred by Khartoum's fear that the Cairo newspapers might publish secrets about these rulers' relationship with the world's biggest terrorist, although the Cairo newspapers are merely reporting the revelations made by numerous international intelligence services.

AL-AKBHAR advises Khartoum's rulers to spare themselves further trouble and stop provoking Egypt because that will not help them to achieve their aims. Egypt, the paper says, understands the motives for the provocation.

Minister Discusses Security Arrangements for ICPD

NC2308163694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1530 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] Cairo, 23 Aug (MENA)—Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi has stressed that the International Conference on Population and Development [ICPD], scheduled to take place between 5 and 13 September, is held at a time when Egypt has foiled all attempts against its security and stability and after the security forces managed to tighten their control on all terrorist activities and infiltrate the terrorist organizations at home and abroad.

He said Egyptian security forces are responsible for enforcing the Egyptian law on Egyptian territory, noting that this law, in text and spirit, conforms to the esteemed Islamic shari'ah and customs and traditions.

The interior minister stressed that the security forces should preserve these Islamic traditions and values. He said the security services will not allow any side to violate these traditions and will not allow any marches or excesses that may harm the Egyptian people and their values and traditions.

The minister was speaking during a meeting today with his first assistants, assistants, commanders of the Central Region, directors of Cairo and al-Jizah security, and Interior Ministry officials involved in the security of the ICPD.

Mr. al-Alfi decided to set up a major operations room for the security of the ICPD.

The room, which began functioning today, was provided with all necessary means of communication. Security plans for all forces and their moves were prepared and the forces were supplied with all sophisticated means of transportation and weapons.

Police services will, starting today, begin a comprehensive security survey of all the sites they are going to supervise and will make the necessary arrangements for transportation and supplies.

The interior minister stressed that his ministry is fully prepared to prove to the whole world that Egypt is a country of security and stability, and that the ancient Egyptian people can prove their ability to host such major conferences, which shows the entire world Egypt's originality and civilization.

Libya To Cooperate in Crackdown

MM2408111094 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Aug 94 p4

[Text] Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that Libya has agreed to provide facilities for the Egyptian security organs tracking down extremists, allowing them to chase and pursue members of extremist groups across the Libyan borders.

Some sources said that Libya has informed Egypt that it totally rejects the presence of a single Egyptian extremist on its territory and emphasized that it is closely watching the borders in cooperation with the Egyptian authorities and will unconditionally hand any extremist over to Egypt in the interest of Egyptian security and internal stability.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has also learned that extremists have recently been handed over to Egypt from Libya and other Arab and non-Arab states, including Pakistan, which has begun the actual implementation of the extradition agreement concluded between the two countries about two months ago. Reports received in Cairo say

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that Pakistan has begun a close surveillance process to catch the Egyptian extremists who have taken refuge in the region of Peshawar on the border with Afghanistan and who are considered to be the backbone of the so-called "Afghan Arabs."

The sources said that the Egyptian security authorities have recently gone on a heightened state of alert in the course of stringent security measures on all sea, land, and air entry points to abort any infiltration attempt. They also intensified their watch on unofficial routes and roads.

That is seen as part of the early security arrangements and preparations for the arrival of 20,000 guests to attend the international conference on population next month.

U.S. Said Tying Aid to Compliance With ICPD

NC2308113294 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 19 Aug 94 p 1

[Report by 'Amir 'Abd-al-Mun'im]

[Text] The United States has sent urgent messages to the heads of state of the Islamic countries following al-Azhar's fatwa [religious decree] rejecting some recommendations outlined in the International Conference for Population and Development [ICPD] document. The messages urge the leaders to instruct their representatives to the ICPD not to demand cancellation of controversial clauses, but to be content with emphasizing that no binding resolutions will be passed.

The U.S. Government stressed through its ambassadors who conveyed these messages that it strongly backs this conference and attaches great importance to the stability of population growth, having placed this goal on top of U.S. national security interests. High-placed sources stressed that the U.S. State Department has obtained a near consensus on the contents of the document.

There is general agreement that the conference should be convened in a calm atmosphere and its resolutions signed without objection. The U.S. Government has obtained an affirmation from the Egyptian Government that it will lead no opposition by the Islamic countries against the draft recommendations. The sources stressed that the United States links aid with compliance with every ICPD resolution and with signing another UN document pledging a halt to population growth, stabilizing the population, and taking the necessary measures to this effect. Egypt was one of the first countries to sign this document.

The United States felt concerned after the al-Azhar statement was issued and concerning the public's mounting opposition to the ICPD in the Islamic countries. This prompted the United States to intensify its contacts and apply pressure until the conference convenes in September.

Muslim Lawyers Take Action To Stop ICPD

NC2308174594 Paris AFP in English 1634 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] Cairo, Aug 23 (AFP)—Muslim fundamentalist lawyers have taken legal action to stop the world population conference from going ahead in Cairo next month, legal officials said Tuesday.

The lawyers, who brought proceedings last week, said the week-long conference starting on September 5 "harms Egypt" and "aims to impose anti-Islamic decisions" on the country.

The fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood group on Monday [22 August] joined forces with Muslim clerics and scholars denouncing the conference as "sacrilegious."

A statement from the group condemned the conference's draft resolutions for allegedly condoning "sexual relationships among adolescents, homosexual relationships, abortion as a means of family planning and trying to break up the family as a social nucleus, and providing adolescent girls with family-planning devices."

Contacts With U.S. Said To Serve Peace Talks, Ties

NC2308141794 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1140 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Commentary by Ahmad Sha'ban: "Egyptian Efforts in Service of Arab Causes"]

[Text] The active Egyptian diplomacy always seeks to serve local and Arab issues. An important channel for this diplomacy, as far as bilateral relations and the Middle East peace process are concerned, is the contacts between Cairo and Washington. In a few days' time, U.S. Vice President Al Gore will arrive in Cairo on a visit of several days for talks that will particularly focus on Egyptian-U.S. relations, especially in the fields of economy and trade. The talks will be held in light of Egypt's plan to encourage investment, under which some 40 percent of the total investment is allocated to Arab and foreign projects. The talks will also come in light of Egypt's attempt to increase its exports to the United States and its efforts to reform its economy. There is also the technological cooperation between Egypt and the United States, which reflects positively on development in Egypt.

In any Egyptian-U.S. meeting, the main, central issue is peace in the Middle East. So far, many steps have been made within the peace process. They include the Palestinian-Israeli agreement and the Jordanian-Israeli agreement. But aside from these two agreements and their positive results for peace in the entire region, there remains the main issue; namely, the Syrian-Israeli negotiating track, to which the Lebanese-Israeli negotiating track is linked in some way or another.

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Here we pause for a while to say that both Egypt and the United States are turning much attention to this issue. The achievement of peace in the entire region and the return of rights to their owners are Egypt's chief concern. They are also among the current American priorities. U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's numerous tours of the region show evidence of this concern and show American determination to play an effective role in overcoming every obstacle on the road to a comprehensive peace.

Naturally, when the United States cooperates with Egypt in this regard, it realizes the importance of Egypt's influence in the Arab world and its close links with Syria. This qualifies Egypt to play a role in this issue. As President Muhammad Husni Mubarak has repeatedly stressed, Syria is sincere in its inclination toward peace, but at the same time, it adheres to its right for an Israeli withdrawal from all Syrian territory. Egypt supports and backs this right.

The Israelis have their own position. If recent news agency reports that Israel accepts a timetable for withdrawal from the Golan are true, then this may constitute a good basis for a movement toward an agreement between the two sides, an agreement that resolves the differences and launches true steps toward peace. Hence, we always stress that Egypt spares no effort and misses no opportunity in its work to serve local and Arab issues that concern Egypt and the entire region, notably now the Middle East issue and the Syrian-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli talks for a peace agreement that will end some 50 years of conflict among the states of the region. But this peace should be based on returning rights to their owners, should enable the states of the region to devote their time to construction and development, and should allow the peoples of the region to enjoy prosperity, stability, and security.

Foreign Minister's Visit to Israel Previewed

NC2408071894 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0605 GMT 24 Aug 94

[Text] Cairo, 24 Aug (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa will begin a two-day visit to Israel next Tuesday [30 August] in response to an invitation from his Israeli counterpart Shim'on Peres.

The newspaper AL-AHRAM today cites Egyptian Ambassador to Israel Muhammad Basyuni as saying that Musa will hold talks with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and other Israeli officials on ways to promote the Middle East peace process and strengthen the Palestinian Self-Rule Authority. He will also discuss ways of developing Egyptian-Israeli diplomatic exchanges.

The Egyptian ambassador said that official Israeli circles are expressing much satisfaction with Musa's coming visit.

Basyuni told AL-AHRAM that enhanced diplomatic activity, including an exchange of visits, is expected between Egypt and Israel. He added that a delegation of 30 Egyptian businessmen and Chamber of Commerce members will visit Israel on Sunday to discuss bilateral cooperation. He noted that the Egyptian ministers of tourism, economy, and scientific research will also visit Israel soon to discuss with their Israeli counterparts ways of boosting bilateral cooperation.

He added that a delegation of Israel's joint energy committee will visit Egypt next week to discuss a projected oil and gas pipeline between Alexandria and Tel Aviv. He pointed out that the delegation's talks will deal with the probable Israeli purchase of Egyptian natural gas in line with a recent agreement reached during Egyptian Petroleum Minister Hamdi al-Banbi's visit to Israel.

Deal To Export Saudi Oil to Israel Reported

NC1908170794 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 17 Aug 94 pp 1, 11

[Excerpt] The talks that Minister of Petroleum Dr. Hamdi al-Banbi held in Israel last week have uncovered a somewhat secret agreement between Israel and Saudi Arabia to export the latter's oil products to the former through a third state linked with Israel by economic, political, and diplomatic ties.

According to informed sources, the agreement provides for exporting Saudi petrochemical products to Israel, particularly "Petromin" products. The agreement seeks to achieve exports of 2 million tons within two years in the context of a long-term deal to export 12 million tons.

The sources add that Israeli officials discussed with al-Banbi the possibility of Egyptian companies playing the role of broker, exporting Arab oil to Israeli firms and doing the same thing between Israel and other states that have no relations with it.

Dr. al-Banbi promised to discuss the matter in detail with the Arab states and officials in Egypt. [passage omitted]

Coptic Pope on 'Palestine' Travel Ban

NC1808125794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1150 GMT 18 Aug 94

[Text] Beirut, 18 Aug (MENA)—Pope Shanudah III, pope of Alexandria and patriarch of the Coptic diocese of St. Mark, has reaffirmed that Copts will only enter Jerusalem with all the Arabs and Muslim brothers because this is a pan-Arab matter. He remarked that the Gaza-Jericho agreement changes nothing in that firm stance. This agreement represents a step that should be followed by several other steps, Shanudah added.

In an interview with the Lebanese newspaper AL-SAFIR today, Pope Shanudah added that his decision to ban Copts from visiting Jerusalem applies to all Palestine. The only exception are priests who work in Jerusalem to

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serve Christian holy places and properties and guard them against being seized by the Jews, he said.

The pope said that many problems still exist between the Copts and the Jews, including that of the Dayr al-Sultan monastery, which Israel sequestered and refused to hand over to us, giving it to the Ethiopians to serve certain political goals and win the favor of the Falasha Jews.

Official Denies Presence of 'Extremists' in Yemen

NC1908185794 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 12 Aug 94 p 1

[Report by 'Abd-al-Nabi 'Abd-al-Sattar]

[Text] Ambassador 'Abd-al-Malik Sa'id, charge d'affaires at the Yemeni Embassy in Cairo, has affirmed that there is security cooperation between Cairo and Sanaa to curtail exploitation of Yemeni territory for the flight of Egyptian extremists. He denied that there are Egyptian extremists in Yemen.

The Yemeni interior minister is expected to visit Cairo shortly for security talks with Egyptian officials. The ambassador stressed that Egypt and Yemen intend to sign an agreement to organize fishing and the entry of Egyptian fishing boats into Yemen's territorial waters.

Saudi Arabia Hands Over Condemned Fugitive

NC1808124894 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1210 GMT 18 Aug 94

[Text] Cairo, 18 Aug (MENA)—Airport security men this morning received a fugitive criminal who had escaped the death sentence. He was arrested by Interpol in Saudi Arabia.

Muhammad Muhammad al-Jarish was sentenced to death in Egypt after being condemned in a first-degree murder trial. He fled the country.

Al-Jarish was seized by Interpol in Saudi Arabia and was extradited under tight guard on a plane coming from Riyadh today.

Following contacts between the Egyptian and Saudi police over the past few days, al-Jarish was handed over to the Egyptian authorities today.

Mubarak Meets UAE Leader During Visit to Geneva

NC2308142094 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1325 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Excerpt] Geneva, 23 Aug (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak met with his Excellency Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, United Arab Emirates [UAE] president, during a lightning visit lasting several hours that President Mubarak made to Geneva today.

The two Arab leaders reviewed a number of developments in the Arab arena in light of current international changes and ongoing contacts to clear the Arab air.

The two leaders also completed discussion of issues between the two fraternal countries related to the financing of a number of investment projects in the agricultural, industrial, and tourism sectors in Egypt.

Shaykh Zayid is now on a private visit to Geneva following a visit to Saudi Arabia and Egypt. [passage omitted]

Mubarak Speech Marks Muhammad's Birthday

NC2108113494 Cairo ESC Television in Arabic 1918 GMT 20 Aug 94

[Speech by President Muhammad Husni Mubarak at a celebration marking Prophet Muhammad's birthday in Alexandria—live]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Grand al-Azhar imam, dignified ulema, our noble guests, brothers and sisters: No gathering is more dear to me than this intimate, spiritual one [applause] where we meet to mark the most glorious occasion in our great history, the birthday of the savior of mankind and the messenger to humanity, our Lord Muhammad, the last of the messengers and prophets, may God's peace and prayers be upon him and upon all brothers, all God's messengers and prophets.

To celebrate this noble occasion is to express loyalty and gratitude to the one who gave us and all humanity what deserves the best of thanks and praise. The celebration awakens the consciences of the strayed ones, alerts the hearts of the unmindful, and embodies before us the ideal that sharpens our determination to move toward what achieves the best life and pushes our march along the right path. When we mark this anniversary anew, we invoke the splendid personality of the Prophet and his virtuous life; we renew our reading of his creative history; and we dutifully glorify his valiant struggle for the success of his call and the achievement of his objective and message.

But none of this can be done correctly except through love of the noble Prophet, who deserves the sincerest of love and the highest of glorification and respect. The great Prophet is a model of life, a call for salvation, and an immortal message of civilization. Responding to the call of the Prophet means following his model of life, pursuing his call for salvation, and adopting the values of his immortal message of civilization.

The Prophet's conduct and way of life, from childhood to adolescence to young manhood and finally to manhood and old age, is an ideal which, if we follow it, will help our nation experience a sound and pure childhood, a promising adolescence, a strong and dynamic youth, a decent and ideal manhood, and a brilliant and fascinating elderliness.

The call of the Prophet, may peace and prayers be upon him, is a divine call for the well-being of man in both life and afterlife. It is a call of the Creator, who knows what

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is good for his creations and realizes their covert and overt intentions and the tendencies of their souls and hearts. This divine call honored man, placed him in the highest of positions, made him God's successor on earth, and put everything in life in his service. A prominent feature of this honoring of man is the call to liberate man's body, soul, and mind. Another feature is the call for building man physically, morally, ethically, and in behaviorally. The call for guiding mankind to what elevates him and achieves happiness for him in life and the hoped-for success in the afterlife is yet another feature of God's honoring of man.

All this came in the message of Islam that was revealed to Muhammad, God's peace and prayers be upon him. The call organizes the right creed, the tolerant shari'ah, and the worship rites that link man to God and make man always feel that he is being watched by his creator and commits him to the laws God drafted for man's happiness in life and afterlife.

The message of the Prophet raised sublime human principles and lofty cultural values. It laid firm foundations and set the main objectives where the well-being and happiness of humanity lie. It allowed people to think freely and ponder ways to achieve these principles and objectives.

Muhammad's message, therefore, is characterized by being vital and capable of coping up with developments; it helps movement and progress. The message opened wide the door to enlightened interpretations and proper applications within the set norms as determined by the decisive texts in the noble book [the Koran] and supported by the great Prophet's actions and sayings.

One of the most delicate and greatest teachings of our Prophet, which opens the door to the interpretation consonant with development, is his saying: What Muslims see as good is good for God; and his saying to his companions on an earthly matter that has nothing to do with religion: You know more about your own life's affairs. Thus, the Prophet's exemplary way of life, his call for salvation, and his immortal message were the sound, wise bases from which the early Muslims started. With them, they moved from the dark defunct pre-Islamic era to the guiding light of Islam, and from the tribalism that divides people through conflicts and hostilities to the civilization that brings hearts closer through peace, love, and fraternity.

The life and conduct of the Prophet were the foundations that brought into Islam various peoples; they embraced God's religion, following Muhammad's model, responding to his call, and believing in his message. It was those foundations that established Islamic society on the basis of freedom, democracy, equality, and justice; determined relations among its sons on the basis of brotherhood, compassion, cooperation, and solidarity; and built life on the basis of glorifying useful learning, respecting fine art, sanctifying serious work, and appreciating good and abundant production.

On those values and foundations, brothers and sisters, the movements of enlightenment and liberation were launched in the past century. Those movements were led by enlightened thinkers, creative ulema, and sincere leaders. They all worked to rectify the march of the nation toward its great objectives. They adopted the noble Islamic values—the values which originally formed the basis of our ancestors' development and constitute the best guarantee for the development of the sons and their progress, well-being, and happiness.

While our nation was trying to achieve its goals and regain its position, regrettably some corrupt and faulty factors started to surface. These factors have managed to keep the nation or some of its members far from the essence of the pure religion, which calls for cohesion and solidarity and advocates amity and understanding. Our pure religion urges people to show love and tolerance and calls for renouncing tribal feuds, religious conflicts, and ignorant calls. Our religion urges the people to cling to the causes of civilized culture and pursue the noble methods of civilization that represent the goal of the immortal Islamic humanitarian message.

Serious negative factors emerged in our arena during the past few years, which have impeded our nation's march and planted thorns on its road, thus obstructing its efforts to complete its renaissance and restore its position. These negative factors are demonstrated in the involvement in conflicts, falsification of slogans, failure to arrange priorities, and lack of comprehensiveness.

Involvement in conflicts was prompted by various motives and assumed different shapes. This is sometimes triggered by tribal feuds over power or caused by a religious struggle to impose ideas. At other times it is prompted by a political struggle to seize power or by a selfish struggle to undermine the rights of others. Matters have even become worse with brothers declaring wars on brothers in the same country and neighbors attacking neighbors in the same region. Brothers have started to terrorize brothers in the same religion.

Perhaps the most painful and shameful point is that these culprits belong to the nation of Islam and claim that their actions are for the sake of Islam. They even distort religious texts and words to justify their claims and actions.

Those who entertain true Islamic ideas know well that these various shapes and motives of struggle are completely alien to the principles of our pure religion. We all know that on the basis of the Prophet's teachings and biography, our religion is one of unity, freedom, and democracy, the religion of love, tolerance, and prosperity. It is absolutely not a religion of hatred, enmity, and struggle.

These struggles are a great sin. They are an even greater sin if they are carried out in the name of religion. The pure texts of religion have called for cohesion and

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brotherhood for the sake of achieving strength, dignity, security, safety, and rejecting weakness, shame, and loss.

We must remember God's words: And hold last, all together, by the rope which God stretches out for you, and be not divided among yourselves. And fall not into disputes, lest your heart and your power depart. [Koranic verses] We also must remember our Prophet's words that it is forbidden for a Muslim to kill a Muslim or encroach on his property.

The falsification of slogans is linked with the aforementioned problem, because it is part of its excuses and advocates. Those who are involved in struggles resort to justifying their courses with false slogans brandished in order to deceive and misguide people or use them as masks to cover their reckless desires and covetous designs. In the field of politics, they use the slogan of freedom while they abolish every freedom except their freedom to carry out aggression and impose ideas.

In the field of religion, while they shout false slogans about the rules of religion and shari'ah, they seek powers and reject everything that concerns the people's stability and security according to God's wish. They are also against any progress or prosperity in life.

In the field of reform, they also raise the banner of fundamentalism and claim that they want all the affairs of society to be based on the principles followed and approved by the ancestors. In fact, they are very distant from the correct principles and the open-minded sources, in that they want to shut society up inside an unjust prison dominated by their rotten and retarded ideas and their stagnant and backward allegations, which are as far as can be from the spirit and teachings of Islam and from the glorious feats of our ancestors. The principles of true Islam do not reject development, oppose progress, or make enemies of modernism and the civilized way of life.

In the realm of the call, they also hoist the banner of jihad. According to their claims, it consists of forcing others to embrace their religion and oppressing those who do not comply. This duress or oppression goes so far as to kill those who oppose their doctrine or diverge from their standard of behavior. Jihad, in this sense, is a misleading and fake slogan, because the greater jihad, as we have known it through the Prophet's way of life, his call, and his message, is the jihad of the soul, purifying the self, and clearing one's conscience. It does not reach the stage of fighting at all, unless it is a war of defense, protection, or liberation against tyrants who enslave the people and prevent them from choosing the religion they wish to follow.

True jihad does not at all mean hostility to society because of a difference in opinion as the extremists are doing. It never gets to the stage of terrorism, clashes, and killing to impose opinions, as the terrorists do. Extremism is not jihad, nor is terrorism jihad. The first is mental perversion that requires rectification and reform, and the second is deviant behavior that deserves punishment and retribution. We should remember the holy Koran's verses and the pure Prophet's teachings in texts that reject imposing religion or opinion or forcing people to join the path of God through violence, apart from using terrorism, fear, and killing. [crowd chants praise of Mubarak]

Thank you. [applause]

We should remember the words of God Almighty: Let there be no compulsion in religion. [Koranic verse] We also have to remember God's words to his great Prophet: Therefore, do thou give admonition, for thou art one to admonish. Thou art not one to manage men's affairs. [Koranic verse] We also must remember our Lord's words to his Prophet and to every preacher who follows his course: Invite all to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious. [Koranic verse]

Our nation has been afflicted with the disease of neglecting its priorities, which is linked to the previous two diseases—the disease of conflicts and the disease of banners—because it is the reason for these two diseases and a factor in their spread. This disease is manifested in various ways and behaviors that divert some people from the correct path and mislead them into futile activities that merely waste effort and opportunities and squander energy.

Many are they who do not attempt to meet the major demands of the nation and are not interested in its urgent needs and basic requirements. They jump to issues and aspirations that should have no place until after the necessities are met and the most basic objectives are achieved.

Many people ignore the nation's need for refined education and sufficient economic development. They belittle the importance of the nation's stability and denounce the nation's endeavor to achieve just peace. These people, furthermore, discuss things that do not help the nation fight the illiteracy among the majority of its sons, that do not spare the nation the threat of poverty and famine in many of its regions, and that do not prevent the nation from experiencing bloody tensions and conflicts in many of its areas.

These people forget, or pretend to forget, priorities and how they should be listed and necessities and how to make the best effort to satisfy them. They forget, or pretend to forget, that our nation needs, above all, a useful knowledge that enlightens minds and leads our march toward progress. It is shameful for our nation to continue to have the highest rate of illiteracy in the world when our religion calls for knowledge, and the first chapter in our holy book is the chapter of al-'Alaq, which begins: Read in the name of the Lord and cherisher who created. [Koranic verse]

Those who ignore priorities also forget, or pretend to forget, that our nation needs, above all, a strong

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economy that can be built through serious work, good and abundant production, and exploiting all the natural resources, human forces, and scientific expertise that God granted to mankind so that the nation can take its share of abundance and live the dignified life that befits a great, ancient nation.

In many of its chapters, the holy Koran urges that this essential living need be satisfied; so do the blessed sayings and actions of the Prophet, which are full of calls to achieve this basic economic development. How wonderful is the great Prophet's saying: If the day of judgment comes and one of you has a seedling in his hand and can plant it, you should.

Those who ignore priorities also forget, or pretend to forget, that for the nation to develop scientifically and economically, it needs stability and security. This is what allows development and prosperity. And there can be no stability without the just peace that enables society to continue its march forward. Nothing wastes opportunities more than disturbances, and nothing harms nations more than wars, which are beneficial only to arms dealers and those who like to shed blood and kill souls.

The noble Prophet, whose blessed birthday we are celebrating today, called for stability and glorified peace. His life abounded with peaceful coexistence with others. He resorted to war only in exceptional cases, to repulse a treacherous aggression or foil a premeditated conspiracy. God says in his holy book: God does call to the home of peace, and He says: If the enemy incline toward peace, do thou also incline toward peace. [Koranic verses]

Isolation and stagnation are a fourth chronic disease and a regrettable negative feature caused by great stubbornness and pretentious oneupmanship. No matter what the causes of this disease, it conflicts with mental freedom and tolerance and cultural openness, which our Islamic nation experienced in the eras of prosperity.

This crippling disease closes the windows of light to our nation, breaks down the bridges between it and the world in which it is living, and indeed, often wastes our nation's chances to benefit from the achievements of others—achievements that have elevated thinking, boosted the economy, and developed society, ensuring good health, civilized minds, and happy hearts.

This disease has reached the stage where it has driven some to simply reject mere dialogue with others or listening to views and ideas for fear that these views and ideas may contain something that differs from our values or diverge from our principles.

The most recent example of this negative and deplorable phenomenon is the furor that has greeted the International Conference on Population and Development [ICPD] that will be held in Cairo next month. This is an international, scientific, developmental, and humanitarian conference concerned with discussing the issues of mankind and the world. The choice of Egypt as the venue for this conference is testimony to Egypt's respected international status, the high scientific position it represents, and the unshakeable power of the minds it is armed with. Egypt does not fear dialogue nor does it weaken before any opinion or thought. Those who oppose the ICPD say that the preparatory paper the United Nations proposed for it contained certain channels of investigation that may clash with our principles and conflict with our morals. Those opponents forget, or overlook, the fact that the ICPD's function is to explore the best way to avoid the perils of population explosion. The ICPD aims to link the size of population and the goals of development, to calibrate the population increase with the development of natural resources.

Undoubtedly, during this conference acceptable solutions to this population problem will be presented that will help us avert the danger that is threatening us. However, we cannot rule out that during the conference certain ideas and opinions will be presented that are unacceptable to us. Nobody can imagine that we will approve these ideas or adopt such opinions. [applause]

Nobody imagines that we will approve these ideas or adopt these opinions. However, we are fully prepared to respond to anything that goes against our religion or violates our morality and principles. We are fully prepared to assert justice and highlight the essence of our radiant religion and the humanitarian, civilized, and shining principles of our Islam. We are fully prepared for all of this, thanks to our knowledgeable and enlightened intellectuals and wise and respectable ulema. There isn't a single force in the world that will impose on us an opinion that our religion does not accept. Nobody, whoever he may be, can force us to resolve a problem in ways that violate our shari'ah and firm principles. [applause]

The mere fact that the conference is being held on our land does not commit us to adopt all the ideas that are presented during it, nor to accept all the opinions that are expressed. We welcomed the holding of the ICPD in Egypt due to our open-mindedness, self-confidence, and absence of inhibitions about any dialogue, and based on our firm belief in our religion and adherence to our principles, as well as our ability to portray the principles of our eternal religion and our shari'ah. We also welcomed holding the ICPD in Egypt due to our concern over the status of Egypt within the international community and the appreciation and respect the world has demonstrated for Egypt's science and ulema, in addition to our hope that the world will help us overcome one of the most crucial problems we are facing without violating our principles, religion, or moral standards. Proceeding from all these perspectives, we welcomed the convention of the ICPD in Egypt.

We hope to gain from what the ICPD has to give and to benefit from it when dealing with this grave social, economic, and developmental problem. No one knowing the essence of our religion believes that neglecting or

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overlooking this problem is acceptable to God or to the righteous religion. God Almighty wants his faithful to be strong and affluent and to live happily. The righteous religion does not want its followers to be weak or to live in need and misery. The noble Prophet has said that the strong believer is dearer to God than a weak one. He also said: To leave your children rich after you go is better than to leave them poor and begging from others.

If the population explosion leads to weakness and poverty, then resisting it is permissible and is even a duty. The Prophet, God's prayers and peace be upon him, prayed to God to spare him the strenuous affliction. When asked what he meant by that, he said: Plenty of children and paucity of money.

I will not embark here on scientific research to show how to face this problem. This is the scholars' task. But I only want to note it in passing in view of this recent storm raised over this conference. I would like to remind you of what I already said, namely that our righteous religion has laid down constants and principles that should not be touched, drawn up objectives that have to be sought, and given Muslims the right to interpret the means that lead to these objectives but do not conflict with the constants and principles. Thus, interpretation has been allowed without infringing on firm principles and the clear and definite text. I remind you again of the noble Prophet's saying: If Muslims believe something to be good, then it is good for God too. He also told his companions: You know better the affairs of your world.

Grand Imam the shaykh of al-Azhar, esteemed ulema, brothers and sisters: These four negative points that I underlined as an example have weakened the nation, made it lag behind culturally, and distorted its global image. Therefore these negative points must be rectified and we must look for the right medicines. Our nation, with its glorious civilization, has to have a new awakening. Abiding by the essence of Islam—as represented by the exemplary life of the Prophet, his salvation call, and his immortal message—is the most important element in achieving this desired awakening for our nation. Yes, it is the Prophet's life with all its ideals of ethics, conduct, and giving and his call with all its great values that make man rise above pettiness and ensure progress and elevation for him. The Prophet's message in all its cultural and humanitarian principles aim to make the upright individual in an upright society in an upright nation that deserves to be told: Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind. [Koranic verse]

Thus, our celebration of this anniversary is an occasion for recalling the life of the Prophet, the principles of his call, and the essence of his message. In light of all the above, we can then review our nation's affairs and rectify its course and steps so as to achieve its awakening and, with God's help, attain its glory and renaissance.

You might agree with me when I say that each of our nation's sons has a duty to fulfill according to his ability. It is a duty to achieve these noble objectives and attain this venerable goal. You might agree with me, after all this, when I say that the ulema, propagators, thinkers, and writers have the primary honor of shouldering this responsibility. They have to enlighten this nation about the negative factors that are threatening it and the diseases inflicted on it so we can escape them and return to our victorious march. They must pull the rug out from under those involved in conflicts, those who are shouting false slogans, and those who are forgetting or overlooking the order of priorities and insisting on isolation and stagnation .

This is a call I address to all my Muslim brothers on the occasion of celebrating the birthday of our faithful Prophet. I address my call specifically to all the officials in the nation of Islam, east and west. I also address my call more specifically to those involved in conflicts, slogans, and acts of violence. I say to them: Fear God when dealing with your people. Fear God when you deal with your nation. Fear God when you practice your religion. [applause]

Finally, brothers, sisters, and sons of our nation everywhere, I seize this opportunity to congratulate you on the birth anniversary of our Prophet and to appeal to you to ponder the negative things that are impeding our course. I call on you to benefit from this birthday of the noble Prophet by working for our nation's awakening and thus restore our renaissance and status. I have conveyed the message, and God is my witness. Many happy returns and God's peace and mercy be with you. [applause]

Decree Requiring Permission To Wear Veil Suspended

NC2308125594 Paris AFP in English 1210 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] Cairo, Aug 23 (AFP)—Government attempts to curb Islamic influence in schools were dealt a blow on Tuesday [24 August] when a court suspended a decree that girls must have their parents' permission to wear the veil in class.

Education Minister Husayn Kamil Baha'-al-Din issued the ruling which was to come into effect in the new school year but it was challenged in court by Islamist lawyers representing schoolgirls' parents.

The Cairo administrative court on Tuesday ordered the suspension of the decree, saying it would rule later on whether it was constitutional.

The lawyers argued that the decree violated the dictates of Islam, and was therefore unconstitutional. Al-Azhar, the world's highest Sunni Muslim authority, also denounced the government measure.

The Egyptian Constitution is based on Islamic shari'ah law, which rules that girls who reach puberty should wear the veil.

But the minister said that his order did not ban the veil, but ensured that girls would not be forced to wear it by Muslim extremist teachers.

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Mona Husayn, a veiled university student who attended the court hearing, said: "I am happy, because the suspension proves that Egypt is a Muslim country."

Another veiled college student at the court expressed relief, saying that the education minister was planning to implement the decree in universities as well as schools.

The Cairo administrative court has already cancelled a decision by authorities in the southern Asyut university which banned women wearing the niqab veil, which hides all the body except the eyes, from the university campus.

President Husni Mubarak's government has been fighting growing Islamic influence in Egypt, and has tried to crush a violent campaign by militants which has left more than 400 people dead.

Court Deems School Uniforms Decision 'Invalid'

NC2308170694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1610 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] Cairo, 23 Aug (MENA)—The Administrative Court of the State Council ruled today that the Education Ministry's decision to standardize school uniforms of the primary, intermediate, and high schools was invalid.

In its ruling, the court said that the decision to wear a school uniform is part of a person's freedom guaranteed by the Constitution and that the education minister's decision involved a usurpation of the prerogatives of the legislative authority. This is because the standardization of school uniforms requires legislation from the legislative council (the People's Assembly), as was the case with the police officers' uniforms.

The court added that the education law does not include any provision for a specific school uniform and does not give the minister the authority to do so and that the noble aims that the minister sought from his decision, such as removing the class differences between the students and doing away with the chaotic condition of school uniforms, do not back up his decision.

Economist Warns of Growing Debt-Related Problems

NC1908164594 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 17 Aug 94 p 1

[Report by Misbah Qutb]

[Text] A world-renowned Egyptian economist has affirmed that Egypt's foreign debts will reach $50 billion in the year 2003, even if negotiated debts are written off.

While the World Bank affirms that foreign debts stand at $41 billion at present, the figures reflected in the records of the U.S. Embassy and the Egyptian Government are different.

The economist warned against the worsening of the internal debt problem in Egypt, emphasizing that it will have much worse effects than those left by foreign debts. These include the collapse of social security funds, the problem the United States is suffering from as a result of a growing internal debt.

It is known that the Egyptian Government failed to pay pensions in the 1930's as a result of the collapse of security funds. A number of Egyptian institutions actually fail to pay social security installments on time. They either pay them late or when the worker is pensioned off.

According to the economist, the Egyptian internal debts have reached 115 billion pounds, 40 billion of which are borrowed from social security and pension funds. He affirms that the dollar value will start growing early next year and that interest on Egyptian pound savings will drop to 9 percent, instead of the current 12 percent.

The Egyptian economist revealed that the Egyptian delegation to Washington talks with the World Bank included a minister who does not know a word of English. He kept silent throughout the talks. The conflict between Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi and [Minister of Planning] Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri led the former to give the upper hand in the talks to the minister of the public business sector, who is close to him, rather than the minister of planning.

A well-informed Egyptian economist has revealed that the government is inclined to "fundamentally" change its negotiating plan with the IMF and the World Bank in an attempt to escape the trying pressure particularly put by the IMF to devalue the Egyptian pound. This change favors the payment of the third segment of foreign debts, $4 billions, over a term up to 25 years. These debts were supposed to be written off after negotiations.

The above source adds that the general official attitude is that it is better for them to pay these debts and get the matter over with, particularly after Egyptian circles have decided that the devaluation of the Egyptian pound will destroy everything the government views as an accomplishment in its economic reform program.

The source doubts that the IMF and the World Bank will grant Egypt a clean bill of health that enables it to resume credit dealings with governments and banks, even if negotiations succeed according to the terms of the two sides.

He called for focusing efforts on writing off Egypt's civilian debts to the United States ($6.5 billion) in return for the efforts it has made in the peace process.

Sudan

Ministry Reports on Visit to RSA, Cairo Embassy

EA2308163994 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Excerpts] Foreign Minister Husayn Sulayman Abu-Salih, delivered a letter from Lieutenant General 'Umar

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Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, the president of the Republic, to President Nelson Mandela of the Republic of South Africa [RSA]. The letter concerns the promotion of cooperation between the two countries, as well as issues of common interest at both the regional and international levels. The letter confirms Sudan's readiness to cooperate with South Africa in all areas.

This was stated by Mr. 'Umar Yusuf Baridu, the first undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry, at the ministry's regular forum today. He pointed out that the foreign minister, while in South Africa, attended the opening of Sudan's Embassy in Pretoria. [passage omitted]

He added that Dr. Abu-Salih will chair a conference in Zimbabwe, attended by Sudan's diplomatic representatives in southern Africa, to explain the political and economic developments in the country, besides discussing the spheres of cooperation in various fields. He indicated that Dr. Abu-Salih would visit Zambia, Malawi, Botswana, and Swaziland during his current tour.

Concerning the Sudanese-Egyptian relations, Mr. Baridu explained that intensive contacts with Egyptian officials have succeeded in restoring the electricity to the Sudanese Embassy in Cairo. He added that contacts were continuing and were aimed at restoring the telephone lines.

He stressed that Sudan would participate in all the ministerial and special meetings of the Arab League. He denied that Sudan had requested the Arab League to convene an emergency session to include the problem of Hala'ib. He emphasized that Sudan does not support any movements hostile to neighboring state.

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Oman

Ministry Rejects Saudi-UAE Border Agreement

JN2208182394 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 21 Aug 94 p 4

[Report by Raghidah Dirgham]

[Text] New York—The Sultanate of Oman has rejected a border agreement signed by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates [UAE] in 1974 and documented by Saudi Arabia at the United Nations. Arab diplomats at the United Nations were surprised that Muscat should raise this issue now. UN sources and Oman's UN mission could not explain why the Omani document, dated 28 September 1993, was published at this time.

The Omani Foreign Ministry said in a statement distributed at the United Nations that the Government of the Sultanate of Oman reiterates its "nonrecognition" of the clauses of the agreement "whose provisions cover territories under Omani sovereignty, because the Sultanate of Oman believes that these clauses contradict its absolute national sovereignty over all Omani territories and considers this an encroachment on the legitimate and inalienable rights provided by international agreements."

The day before yesterday [19 August], the Omani Foreign Ministry distributed a statement to the UN member states. A letter addressed to the UN secretary general and dated September 1993 was attached to the statement. The introductory passage of the letter says: The statement is being distributed to the UN member states at the request of the Foreign Ministry on 17 August 1994. The letter provides that the Sultanate of Oman "had no knowledge of the agreement, was not aware of it, and did not participate in it." The letter adds that the provisions of the agreement cover territories, which are under the practical, historical, and legal Omani sovereignty and inhabited by Omani citizens who hold Omani citizenship and enjoy the protection of the State of Oman."

The letter stresses that "the Government of the Sultanate of Oman has full sovereignty over the Omani territories defined and fixed in the international agreements signed with the neighborly states. Any encroachment on these borders is considered an interference in its internal affairs that cannot be accepted."

The letter adds that the sultanate "only recognizes what came in the border agreement signed with Saudi Arabia in 1990, as well as with the Government of Abu Dhabi—the United Arab Emirates. Other than this, the sultanate will not recognize any act or legal action that affects the international border between the Sultanate of Oman on the one hand and Saudi Arabia or the Government of Abu Dhabi on the other. The sultanate will consider that such a thing does not exist."

Saudi Arabia

Relations Established With East European States

LD2208183094 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1650 GMT 22 Aug 94

[Excerpts] The Council of Ministers held its weekly session at al-Salam palace in Jeddah the afternoon of 22 August under the chairmanship of HRH Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, who is the crown prince, deputy prime minister, and commander of the National Guard. [passage omitted]

The minister of information said: The council looked into the items included in the agenda and issued the following resolutions:

First: Having reviewed the recommendation of the Council of Ministers' public committee No. 71 of 13 August, 1994, the council approved the proposal of HRH the minister of foreign affairs, which is as follows:

1. The announcement of the Kingdom's recognition of the states of Slovenia, Croatia, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia.

2. The establishment of diplomatic relations with all East European states that have been or are being recognized to give a chance for those states wishing to open an embassy in Riyadh to do so.

3. The establishment of diplomatic relations and representation urgently with the states that have special importance in East Europe, which are Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary.

4. The appointment of some of the Kingdom's ambassadors as non-resident ambassadors to these states. [passage omitted]

King Receives al-Qadhdhafi Envoy, Message

LD2208124094 Riyadh SPA in English 1222 GMT 22 Aug 94

[Excerpt] Jeddah, Aug 22, SPA—Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz has received a message from Libyan President Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi. The message was delivered to him by Col. Mustafa al-Kharubi, the inspector general of the Libyan armed forces during a reception in his office at al-Salam Palace in Jeddah yesterday. [passage omitted]

United Arab Emirates

Non-Oil Trade Gap Widens Despite Export Growth

NC2008190894 Paris AFP in English 1900 GMT 20 Aug 94

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Aug 20 (AFP)—A deficit in United Arab Emirates (UAE) non-oil trade has widened over the

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past 20 years despite a steady growth in exports, official figures showed on Saturday [20 August].

The gap peaked at 50.9 billion dirhams (13.8 billion dollars) in 1993, compared with 43.6 billion dirhams (11.88 billion dollars) in 1992 and 33 billion dirhams (8.99 billion dollars) in 1991, according to the figures from the central bank and the state-run Emirates Industrial Bank (EIB).

The reports showed the deficit increased because exports and re-exports did not match the rapid rise in imports caused by population growth and a large expansion of the industrial, farming and services sectors.

The deficit stood at around 30 billion dirhams (8.17 billion dollars) in 1990, compared with nearly 20 billion dirhams (5.44 billion dollars) in 1975.

From only 35 billion dirhams (9.5 billion dollars) in 1981, imports jumped to 72.5 billion dirhams (19.75 billion dollars) in 1993.

Although exports and re-exports grew steadily, they stood at only 21.3 billion dirhams (5.8 billion dollars) in 1993, the reports showed.

The UAE has launched a drive to diversify its oil-dependent economy, but most of its new factories manufacture light products such as chemicals, paper, textiles and domestic appliances.

Total investment in the industrial sector stood at 10.8 billion dirhams (2.94 billion dollars), but a large portion of that was provided by the government.

Chemicals took up more than half the investments, receiving nearly 5.9 billion dirhams (1.6 billion dollars).

EIB said the industrial sector could have grown much quicker had the government allocated more funds at the expense of oil.

"Public sector investment concentrated on the development of the oil and gas sector," it said.

The UAE produces around 2.16 million barrels per day of oil, which still provides more than 80 percent of its income.

Oil exports have enabled the UAE to register a consistent surplus in its overall trade balance, standing at 14.5 billion dirhams (3.95 billion dollars) in 1993. But a drop in crude prices turned the surplus in its 1993 balance of payments into a deficit of 650 million dirhams (177.1 million dollars).

Yemen

Salih Addresses Security Personnel on Tasks

JN2308141694 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council and supreme commander of the Armed Forces, today attended the opening session of the expanded leadership meeting of the security and police commanders in the republic, which will be held in Sanaa 23-25 August, and which will discuss issues related to the role and future tasks of the security organs in a way that will reinforce security, stability, and tranquility in the society.

Presidential Council Chairman Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih spoke during the session. He expressed his happiness over this meeting with the police and security officers.

He said: At the outset, we congratulate you and ourselves on the victory, which was achieved for the sake of unity. It is the victory of right over falsehood. It is a victory over rebellion, treason, and secession.

The brother president said: We must reduce political speeches and concentrate on reconstruction and work, because time is money. Over the past four and a half years, the secessionists have sabotaged the homeland and the national economy. These are established facts that are clear to everyone.

The brother president noted that over the past period, the security situation was disrupted as a result of the acts of the saboteurs in the [Yemeni] Socialist Party [YSP] leadership, who were not satisfied with security and stability, and who did not have faith in unity.

He said: We are aware of the actions of the former deposed prime minister aimed at sabotaging the national economy, the administrative systems, and all the revolution's achievements. At a time when the secessionists falsely raised the slogan of modernization and the state of law and order to titillate the feelings of the citizens, they wreaked havoc and did not achieve anything for the people during their tyrannical rule of the people in some of the republic's governorates. Under unity, they planned to obstruct all the development projects, particularly in the governorates of Hadhramaut, Aden, Lahij, Abyan, and al-Mahrah. What the people gained from them were only repression and persecution.

The Presidential Council chairman noted that the victory achieved by our people and their Armed Forces was not an easy one, but was consecrated with the pure blood and dear sacrifices of the elite sons of our people and their Armed Forces.

He said that the secessionist rebels had long ago planned to perpetrate the crime of secession and declare war against unity, adding: We have documents from long ago in the handwriting of traitors ['Ali Salim] al-Bid and [Haydar Abu-Bakr] al-'Attas concerning the printing of a new currency for the southern part of the homeland. We also have documents on the purchase of huge quantities of arms from several countries. He said that the Alyemda planes were used to transport these arms.

He added: Even after the declaration of secession, the secessionist rebels fought fiercely, believing that the

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secession would succeed and that international forces will come to establish a secessionist state for them.

He stressed the importance of the security organs' role at this stage for the sake of upgrading security performance and not tolerating those who violate security or defy the law whoever they may be.

Presidential Council Urges Economic Reforms

JN2208135794 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 22 Aug 94

[Text] The Presidential Council convened today under brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, Presidential Council chairman. It discussed a number of issues and developments on the national front, as well as topics related to enhancing the national reconstruction efforts, overcoming the effects of the war, and building a modern Yemeni state based on pluralistic democracy, comprehensive development, social progress, financial and administrative decentralization, expanded popular participation in the authority, and respect for the freedom of expression, the press, and human rights.

The Presidential Council was briefed on the results of the activities and meetings of the brother chairman and members of the Presidential Council over the past week. It was acquainted with the content of the message of brother Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan 1 September revolution, to the brother Presidential Council chairman, on issues of interest to the relations between the two fraternal countries. The message included an invitation for the brother Presidential Council chairman to take part in the fraternal Libyan people's celebrations on the 25th anniversary of the Libyan revolution.

The Council also discussed a number of political issues and developments and fields of cooperation between our country and fraternal and friendly states. The council called for continued assessment of the views of our countries' ambassadors and for activating diplomatic activity abroad to achieve our country's supreme interests and translate our people's aspirations for establishing developed relations with all brethren and friends on the basis of common interests, positive cooperation, mutual respect, and noninterference in domestic affairs.

The council discussed a number of reports related to the economic and development situation and the pluralistic policy. It called for adopting the necessary measures to effect economic, financial, and monetary reforms in a manner compatible with the various national economic developments and changes and to achieve the supreme national interest.

The council discussed the draft budget of the Higher Elections Committee for 1994 and adopted the appropriate decisions. It also endorsed the House of Representatives' draft law approving the statutes of the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA] and our country's IAEA membership. The council also approved the appointment of a Sanaa deputy mayor. It also discussed a number of issues on its agenda related to the activities of various state agencies and adopted the appropriate decisions and instructions.

Military Commanders Conclude Expanded Meeting

JN2008202394 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 20 Aug 94

[Text] The expanded meeting of the commanders of the Armed Forces concluded today under the chairmanship of brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council and supreme commander of the Armed Forces.

During the meeting, the conferees discussed issues listed on their agenda, as well as several reports and working papers presented by the commanders of sectors, units, and military formations. The conferees assessed our Armed Forces' combat performance in the various sectors during the military operations they carried out against the secessionist rebels of the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] to defend and entrench unity and the results achieved by our Armed Forces.

The discussions also focused on the role of the commanders in restructuring, rebuilding, and reorganizing the Armed Forces on national and scientific foundations in order to strengthen the defensive capability of our country. They conferees also discussed the future missions of our Armed Forces in light of the instructions and directives issued by the brother chairman of the Presidential Council and supreme commander of the Armed forces; the brother defense minister; and the General Staff in order to bolster the structure, training, and preparedness of our Armed Forces.

Responding to the directives of the brother chairman of the Presidential Council, to the contents of the speech he delivered before the expanded meeting of the commanders of the Armed Forces last Wednesday banning partisanship within the Armed Forces and security agencies, and to the need for the commanders of the Armed Forces to hand over their party membership cards as a symbolic step to confirm commitment to banning partisanship within the ranks of the Armed Forces, the commanders of the sectors, units, departments, and the various military formations, as well as senior Armed Forces officers, led by Chief of Staff Brigadier General 'Abd-al-Malik 'Ali al-Sayyani and his deputies, handed over their partisanship cards and signed an undertaking to withdraw from all political parties and organizations in the national arena. They also pledged not to affiliate themselves with any political party or organization during their work in the Armed Forces in order to epitomize the principle of neutrality of the Armed Forces and to abide by the Military Service Law and the Political Parties and Organizations Law, as the Armed Forces are a national institution that belongs to the whole people and is a symbol of national unity.

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The commanders also stressed their loyalty to God, the homeland, the revolution, and unity, as well as their permanent commitment to carrying out the duties and national missions assigned to the Armed Forces to defend the homeland, its sovereignty, its security, and its stability and to safeguard its gains and its achievements, primarily unity and democracy.

During the meeting, the brother chairman of the Presidential Council and supreme commander of the Armed Forces spoke. He expressed his satisfaction with the results of the expanded meeting, with the responsible discussions, and with the working papers that reflect the high level of awareness and determination to promote and modernize the Armed Forces, after our people have entrenched their unity. Our brave Armed Forces, he said, faced up to their responsibility by supporting our people's will to preserve unity, safeguard the march of the homeland, and strongly confront all plans to disrupt the homeland and its unity. He stressed that our Armed Forces will remain loyal to the principles of our people and will be a striking forces in the hands of the people to safeguard their achievements, foremost of which are the revolution, unity, and democracy.

The brother president also praised the heroic performance of our Armed Forces to defend unity in all sectors, clarifying that it would represent a bright chapter in the military history of our Armed Forces and security agencies and of the national struggle of our Yemeni people. He also stressed the need for the specialized military colleges and institutes to benefit from the assessment of the performance of the Armed Forces during the military operations that led to the victory of unity in order to strengthen the positive aspects and to guarantee a future void of shortcomings and missteps.

The brother president then expressed his appreciation for the commanders of the Armed Forces for responding to a decision to ban partisanship within the Armed Forces in compliance with valid laws, pointing out that the secessionist rebels of the YSP tried to ruin the military establishment and entrenched partisanship within its ranks before and after unity. This, he said, resulted in tragedies within the ranks of the Armed Forces and in the homeland due to party conflicts, whose victims were the sons of the Armed Forces and security agencies. He said that the Armed Forces are a national establishment, represent a symbol of national unity, and are a protector of democracy, national sovereignty, and constitutional legitimacy.

Defense Minister brother Staff Brigadier General 'Abd-Rabbuh Mansur Hadi opened the meeting by issuing several instructions and directives related to restructuring and reorganizing the Armed Forces and implementing the new training year and to the future missions of the Armed Forces. The meeting was attended by brother Staff Brigadier General 'Abdallah Husayn al-Bashiri, adviser to the chairman of the Presidential Council and supreme commander of the Armed Forces.

Southerners in Djibouti Reject Damascus Statement

MM2208135094 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 21 Aug 94 p5

[Text] Djibouti, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—The south Yemeni politicians, military personnel, and civilians who had moved to Djibouti have expressed disappointment with the statement issued by the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] after the meeting it held in Damascus on 8 August.

The Yemeni evacuees said the Damascus statement was like a stillborn baby. In a statement they issued yesterday, they expressed their rejection of the results of the Damascus meeting.

The statement, of which AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has received a copy, was addressed to southern Presidential Council Chairman 'Ali Salim al-Bid, his deputy 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Jifri, Prime Minister Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas, and National Assembly (parliament) Speaker Anis Hasan Yahya. It said: "We are your men, tough in times of difficulty and crisis, and we, military and civilians from all organizations including the YSP, the Sons of Yemen League, the Nasirite Unionist Organization, the Liberation Front, and independent figures, loudly declare our rejection of the contents of the Damascus statement."

They emphasized that their position was born, not out of emotion and zeal, but out of conviction that corresponds to the activities of the masses at home and the aspirations of the Yemeni people in the south.

They added that "the sons of the south, though temporarily shaken, forced to leave the homeland tired, and facing living difficulties, remain loyal and will resist evil and aggression and open the way to any effort made under the banner of the Democratic Republic of Yemen."

YSP Officials Said Seeking U.S. Guarantees

JN2208175194 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 21 Aug 94 pp 1, 4

[Report by Ibrahim Humaydi and Iqbal 'Ali 'Abdallah]

[Excerpts] Members of the Political Bureau of the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] have asserted to AL-HAYAH that their colleagues are holding contacts with the U.S. Administration to obtain guarantees for the return of a number of YSP leaders to Yemen.

One member told AL-HAYAH that Muhammad 'Abdu Shatfah, southern Yemeni ambassador in Damascus, is holding contacts with the U.S. ambassador in Sanaa to obtain a guarantee for the return of eight YSP leaders, without naming any of them. He said that the returnees may include YSP Assistant Secretary General Salim Salih Muhammad. He added that the contacts are aimed

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at returning all the colleagues, except the 16 persons who are wanted for trial. [passage omitted]

A prominent member of the Political Bureau said that House of Representatives Speaker Shaykh al-Ahmar fears that his party, as well as true religion, will be endangered by the return of former southern Yemeni President 'Ali Nasir Muhammad and by his expected alliance with the southern military commanders. Meanwhile, President 'Ali Salih is seeking to reduce the influence of the Yemeni Reform Grouping by giving an important post to the former southern Yemeni president, who is currently visiting Paris, and that under no circumstances will 'Ali Nasir inherit the YSP. [passage omitted]

Southern Politician on al-Bid's Plans

MM2408084494 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 22 Aug 94 pp1, 4

[Report by Lutfi Shatarah: "Al-Bid To Move to the Emirates and Resume Activities"]

[Text] London—South Yemeni Vice President 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Jifri has stated that the southern leader 'Ali Salim al-Bid will soon move from the Sultanate of Oman to the United Arab Emirates [UAE]. He said that al-Bid would later leave for the United States or Britain for treatment and then return to Abu-Dhabi to resume his activities from there.

In a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, al-Jifri spoke of the existence of a Sanaa plan to resettle over 1.5 million north Yemeni families (about 5 million citizens) in southern areas over a period of three to five years to change the demographic structure in these areas and totally erase their identities. He also said that "the presence of the southern leaders abroad is a temporary matter, until the south returns to its people."

Al-Jifri said that the burning of all the files in Aden, in the course of the looting and sabotage of the government establishments, was a prelude to the implementation of a plan to change the demographic structure in the south. He said he was confident that "the people of the south will never accept annexation."

He emphasized that the southern leadership abroad "is watching the actions taken on the ground against southern citizens as well as the spontaneous resistance in more than one area." He added: "We still hope that the Sanaa regime and its supporters at home and abroad will realize that the present situation cannot last forever."

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT had learned from several sources that 'Ali Salim al-Bid has comparatively recovered recently and that he is following developments pertaining to the Yemeni question and holding contacts with some national leaders and fraternal and friendly figures in Yemen and abroad, and that he has, for the first time in his own words, denied reports of his retirement from politics in the present circumstances.

Al-Jifri also said: "We are waiting for Lakhdar Brahimi (enovy of the UN secretary general dealing with the Yemeni crisis) to play his part." He said that "Sanaa should be urged to stop its violation of international legitimacy and agree to a dialogue in the context of UN Security Council Resolutions 924 and 931, and also accept the UAE capital Abu-Dhabi as the venue for the next round of dialogue between the north and the south."

The southern official warned that "any attempt to depart from the path of dialogue would lead to new problems for both sides."

He stressed that "the file of the Yemeni issue has not been closed and nobody can close it at the expense of the people of the south." He added that he is "assuming that Dr. 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani, the planning minister who represented north Yemen in the dialogue, takes international legitimacy into consideration and gives it some weight, and that he informed Brahimi of the leadership's decision regarding the Abu-Dhabi meeting."

Al-Jifri cautioned Sanaa that it "should not rely on the natural differences of opinion noticeable in the activities of the southern leadership abroad." He said that "such differences are natural in such circumstances and they do not and never will mean serious divisions that would undermine the southern alliance. In fact they could make it stronger and clearer, and Sanaa would only reap the husks."

He stressed that whoever decides to return is free to do so but that would not weaken the existing southern alliance and would not be the beginning of a resolution of the issue, which "shall remain alive."

He said that "whoever abandons the cause of the people in the south will himself be the loser, but that would be no loss to the cause."

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Baghdad Said Seeking Better Ties With Arabs, West

JN2108092494 Paris AL-MUHARRIR in Arabic 22 Aug 94 p 1

[Unattributed "exclusive" report from Rabat]

[Text] An informed source has confirmed to AL-MUHARRIR that King Hassan of Morocco has received a message from Iraqi President Saddam Husayn authorizing him to reassure all Arab states, particularly the Gulf states and mainly Saudi Arabia, of his good intentions and his readiness to turn over a new leaf of relations based on mutual respect, noninterference in internal affairs, and Arab cooperation.

The Iraqi President has also authorized King Hassan to reassure foreign states, particularly the United States, that he will cooperate with the new world order and that he understands the reasons dictating certain U.S. political stands. According to the informed source, Iraq has asked that the crisis that led to the Gulf war be forgotten and a new chapter of Arab-regional-international cooperation be opened.

A ranking source at the Iraqi Ministry of Information earlier confirmed to AL-MUHARRIR recent reports on Iraqi-regional-international contacts aimed at putting a final end to the Gulf crisis by proposing a drastic and serious solution which can be summed up in the following three points:

1. Iraqi recognition of Kuwaiti borders as delineated by the United Nations;

2. Resolving the issue of the limited number of Kuwaiti prisoners—an issue which is being exaggerated and exploited;

3. Contributing to the coming post-peace era by absorbing and settling 2-3 million Palestinians.

According to the senior information official, Iraq's fulfillment of the above is conditional on the complete termination of the blockade imposed on it and the cancellation of demanded compensation so Iraq will have sufficient oil revenues for reconstruction and a free contribution to the Middle East peace process.

Explaining this new attitude, the Iraqi information official said: There are two types of war—real war and peace war. Iraq is trying to engage in the second type of war after it was forced out of the first.

AL-MUHARRIR is preparing a detailed report on the secrets of Iraqi-Arab-Israeli-U.S.-Western contacts and the price asked for the termination of the embargo.

Kurdish Leader Barzani Ready To Halt Fighting

JN2308201594 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1630 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Excerpts] Salah-al-Din—In the latest reply cable that Mr. Mas'ud Barzani sent to the Kurdistan National Council—the parliament, and to the Council of Ministers at noon on 23 August, he said he is ready to immediately halt the fighting because the parliament's request is the request of the people. [passage omitted]

The parliament and the Council of Ministers in Iraqi Kurdistan held a joint meeting at 1400 on 22 August 1994 and addressed a joint appeal to Mr Mas'ud Barzani and Jalal Talabani to halt the fighting and end the troop reinforcements. They also asked them to be present at an extraordinary meeting that the parliament will hold.

One Killed, 4 Wounded by Mortars in Chamchamal

NC2308165494 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] The forces of the ruling regime in Baghdad shelled the city of Chamchamal with mortars at 0200 on 22 August. One citizen was martyred, four others were injured, and the citizens' property and houses suffered heavy material damages as a result of this barbaric shelling.

Labor Minister Receives World Food Aid Envoy

JN2208121194 Baghdad INA in English 1122 GMT 22 Aug 94

[Text] Baghdad, Aug. 22, INA—Iraqi Labour and Social Affairs Minister Latif Nusayyif Jasim today received at his office the resident representative of World Food Program in Iraq. The minister praised the food aid the program was offering to Iraq under the circumstances of unjust blockade imposed under influence of the U.S. Administation on the U.N Security Council.

The U.N official expressed hope of lifting the blockade on the people of Iraq and Iraq's return to its former position an active state in offering assistance to World Food Program and help to world poor countries.

The meeting discussed cooperation between the Labour and Social Affair's Ministry and World food Program and ways of promoting it.

Columnist Says 'Enemies' Want To Keep Iraq Weak

JN2308211494 Baghdad BABIL in Arabic 18 Aug 94 p 1

[Article by Abu-Sarhan: "The Illusion"]

[Excerpts] Before the UN Security Council's debate on the blockade last March, a meeting was held between a colleague of ours on the Board of Directors and an Iraqi diplomat.

The Iraqi diplomat made a lengthy and boring review and alleged that lifting the blockade was linked to the removal of the word "governorate" that BABIL uses to refer to Kuwait. He said that national duty should make the newspaper abandon that word and that the Security

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Council would lift the blockade during its upcoming session in March only if we canceled that word.

Our colleague commented that after they [the enemies] tried to drown us in the middle of the river during the Mother of Battles, it would be illogical for them to extend their hands to us after we reached the bank.

We believed that the blockade would not be lifted officially in March.

Several days later, we received instructions not to use either the word "govenorate" to refer to Kuwait or the word "Kazimah".

The Security Council held its debate in March, but did not lift the blockade even partially, and we did not get any word of praise. Then came the fifth month and then the seventh month and the blockade was not lifted. [passage omitted]

It has become clear that the blockade will not be lifted but will erode or collapse as a result of the efforts of the sons of Iraq. The main aims of maintaining the blockade are to silence the angry voices of demonstrators, who were expressing their true feelings and their hatred toward the Americans, and to paralyze the hands which carried arms, opened fire on enemy aircraft, and regained the land. So, the principal aim of the blockade is to starve these people. When people satisfy their appetite, they begin to aspire, and when they are starved, they become too weak to carry out the duty. Consequently, the angry voices will subside and people will look for bread rather than protest. With the passage of time, the state of absolute rejection has become subject to interpretations. Some people support retaliation, others do not.

This article is not aimed at confrontation or stopping the negotiations with the United Nations. Rather, its main purpose is that we should not remain at the crossroads. We have to accept or reject the UN way. It would have been better had we rejected it a year or two years ago. Why does the blockade not end?

It does not end because it is linked with a number of waverings and conspiracies, which have begun to take shape and surface in the Arab region. To them, a hungry, besieged, and weak Iraq is much better than a free, strong, and fed up Iraq. This is what the enemies of Iraq believe. [passage omitted]

Campaign To Reconstruct Buildings Damaged in Blast

JN2308202794 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1914 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Aug (INA)—The Industry and Minerals Ministry's organs this evening launched a campaign to reconstruct the houses and the building housing AL-JUMHURIYAH Publishing House and the newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH, which were damaged by the booby-trapped car explosion which was carried out by agents affiliated with the enemies of Iraq yesterday evening. The explosion martyred a child and wounded 13 other citizens.

The campaign includes reconstructing five houses which sustained various damages as well as restoring the facade of both AL-JUMHURIYAH Publishing House and the newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH. The Industry and Minerals Ministry set up an operations room to work day and night to reconstruct the damaged buildings.

Paper Reports Completion of Power Projects

JN2408065794 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 14 Aug 94 p 4

[Article by Rahman al-Juwari]

[Text] Teams from the Electricity Projects Company, a unit of the Ministry of Industry and Minerals, have completed the East Basrah 132-kilovolt Power Transformer Plant with a transmission capacity of 126 millivolts. The completion of this plant constitutes the first phase of a project to improve the electricity network in al-Basrah Governorate.

Announcing this to AL-THAWRAH, a ministry spokesman said that this plant was built to supply electricity to residential areas in al-Basrah and to solve the power constraints experienced by the governorate.

The spokesman pointed out that the plant was built at a cost of 70 million dinars, including the cost of the 132-kilovolt high tension cables for the plant's 32-km link with the national grid. The plant was completed in a record time of 14 months and with financial savings amounting to 20 million dinars.

The spokesman also announced the completion of the 132-kilovolt high tension line between al-Qadisiyah and al-Ghammas in 12 months in order to supply electricity from the high tension al-Qadisiyah Power Station to al-Ghammas Subdistrict and the irrigation pumps in the region, which is known for its rice crop in the summer and wheat and barley crops in winter. The area has suffered constant power cuts in the past. This line is about 42 km long and it consists of 12 towers weighing between six and 20 tonnes each. The total cost of the project is approximately 33 million dinars. Some $3 million have been saved in this project.

The ministry's technical teams also completed the 132-kilovolt high tension power line between al-Yusufiyah and Petrochemical Project No. 2 in order to supply power to the petrochemical project and other industrial projects from al-Yusufiyah Power Station. The line is 31 km long.

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Rabin AL-HAYAH Interview on Golan Withdrawal

JN2308163694 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 23 Aug 94 p 5

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin by correspondent Ruba al-Husari in Jerusalem—date not given]

[Text] [Al-Husari] Israel, so far, has reached a preliminary agreement with the Palestinians, and has concluded the Washington Declaration with Jordan ending the state of war with it. Can we say that you are on your way to signing an agreement with Syria soon?

[Rabin] I hope so. However, there are two obstacles to this. The first is the big gap between our basic stands and Syria's stands. The second is the method with which the negotiations are being conducted. This is not the method through which we reached the Oslo agreement with the Palestinians or the Washington Declaration with Jordan. Contacts between us and Syria are not as broad as was the case with the Palestinians or with Jordan and which paved the way to public meetings which culminated in the conclusion of an agreement.

[Al-Husari] Does this mean you are not satisfied with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's mediation?

[Rabin] In the absence of any direct contact, we prefer that Secretary Christopher continues his shuttle tours among the parties.

[Al-Husari] Can we say that his tours have achieved something until now?

[Rabin] They further clarified the stands but they have not yet reached even the beginning of an agreement on basic issues.

[Al-Husari] When will Secretary Christopher return to the region?

[Rabin] No definite date has been set. But, I believe that he will come in the second half of September.

[Al-Husari] You have said more than once, particularly during Christopher's last visit to the region, that something has started to move with Syria. On what have you based this optimism?

[Rabin] I said that something has started to change with respect to the overt diplomacy Syria undertakes. The fact that their official television station carried live the proceedings of the signing of the Washington Declaration between us and Jordan, the inauguration of the international crossing between Elat and al-'Aqabah, and my meeting with King Husayn in al-'Aqabah has shown that Syria wants to prove to the Israeli public that the change has started. However, the change did not cover the basic topics that are being negotiated.

[Al-Husari] Was there any change in the mechanism of negotiations between you and Syria following the preliminary agreements that were reached with Jordan and the Palestinians?

[Rabin] We do not have the same mechanism with the Syrians because they refuse this. Therefore, we continue to use the mechanism they accept. We trust Secretary Christopher and it seems the Syrians do too. We pursue the negotiations in the method that the two parties and the United States have agreed on.

[Al-Husari] Does this mean that the other agreements have not had an impact on the Syrian track?

[Rabin] I will judge this through the continuation of the negotiations. Logically, they should. But, to what degree this has had an impact is something that only the results will show.

[Al-Husari] It seems that you and the Syrians now accept the principle of a phased peace. How do you envisage a peace that is attained in more than one phase?

[Rabin] We are not discussing with Syria something similar to our agreement with the PLO or with Jordan. In both cases, we did not reach a peace treaty but agreements that will result in us signing a peace treaty. Let us take Jordan, for example. What took place in Washington is the termination of the state of war. But in a peace treaty, the state of war is terminated and peace is established. So far, we have ended the state of war with Jordan, and we are pursuing our negotiations. We started to implement part of the peace structure. As for the PLO, we signed a transitional agreement that will be implemented in stages. The first stage is Gaza-Jericho. We completed it. We are now taking other steps in the transfer of power in five fields. The department of education will be transferred before 1 September, that is before the beginning of the scholastic year. Transfer of power will follow in the fields of health, social affairs, tourism, and direct taxation. An agreement on all this will be reached this week and implementation will start after we address the donor countries to get $40 million for this year. The early transfer of powers does not mean any change in the fact that there will be still an Israeli military rule and civilian administration.

With respect to Syria, we are speaking of a peace treaty that will be implemented in stages.

[Al-Husari] Can you clarify the form of these phases?

[Rabin] As long as we did not reach agreement on the basic elements that will enable us to sign a peace treaty—which will include the number of the withdrawal phases, a definition of the depth of withdrawal, and the kind of normalization in return for the first phase, which will include a limited withdrawal—I cannot give an answer. Also, we have not discussed the security arrangements yet. For us, it is a four-part package: The depth of withdrawal, the timing and rotation of withdrawal phases, normalization, and security arrangements. We do not wish to comply with one of the four elements before we reach an understanding on the package as a whole. As I said earlier, it is like a table with four legs which cannot stand unless the four legs are available.

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[Al-Husari] Will Israel accept to accelerate the phases upon the implementation of what will be agreed on?

[Rabin] We have a timetable of our own, and it is not speedy. We mean several years, and I will not specify their exact number.

[Al-Husari] What are the obstacles facing a faster implementation of the agreement as Syria wishes?

[Rabin] This is totally impossible. I do not believe that we can implement any peace treaty unless this is done gradually. If we take Egypt as an example, we will see that it took us four and a half years between the visit of late Egyptian President Anwar al- Sadat in November 1977 and the end of implementation in April 1982.

[Al-Husari] Do you believe that you can achieve peace with Syria before the date set for the general elections in Israel in 1996?

[Rabin] We will do all that we can to achieve this. However, to reach an agreement, you must have two parties, for one party cannot do this separately. At any rate, from our viewpoint, the implementation of the agreement will continue until after the coming elections. However, if this is possible, we will be concerned about reaching an agreement acceptable to our government before 1996. I have explained more than once that I will be committed to holding a referendum if an agreement is reached on a significant withdrawal. The people then will have to approve this agreement. At that time, we will explain all the elements of the agreement to the people and ask them to say whether they are in favor of or against the agreement.

[Al-Husari] You have continuously asked the Syrian president to make some steps to prove to the Israelis that he is serious about his peace efforts. So, what do you yourself have to offer to the Syrian people to persuade them that you are serious about changing Israel's image as they know it?

[Rabin] Al-Sadat did this this in a very impressive way. He came to Jerusalem. The Jordanians also agreed to hold secret meetings with us for a long time. In addition to that they have taken upon themselves to prevent, as far as possible, any infiltration operations from Jordan to Israel and the (occupied) territories. But the Syrians did not do such things. The only thing the Syrians have done is to carry the Washington and al- 'Aqabah proceedings on television. However, this is very little. For our part, we are ready to invite Syrian journalists to come to Israel on a mutual basis.

[Al-Husari] You have accustomed the Syrians to viewing you as a state founded on violence, especially in view of your acts in Lebanon, which include the bombardment and killing of civilians. Why do you not make a gesture in Lebanon to prove that you really want peace?

[Rabin] Let me tell you that we have offered U.S. Secretary of State Christopher a plan on Lebanon. The plan is based on the Israeli stand that in case there is true peace and security for Israel, Israel is ready to withdraw to the former international border which used to exist between Lebanon and Palestine in the [British] mandate era. We have offered to do that as follows: The Lebanese Army would deploy on the northern border of the security zone which we and the South Lebanese Army [SLA] control. Within six months, it should prove that it can prevent attacks against us and dismantle the Hizballah organization. If this is achieved within six months, we are ready to complete our withdrawal to the recognized international border within three months, provided that security arrangements are included to ensure the nonoccurrence of attacks. The Lebanese Army should also treat the SLA the way it treated other special militias, in terms of enrolling them within its ranks and ensuring that none of them will be harmed. We are ready to end our issue with Lebanon within nine months if they prove that they are capable of controlling terrorism. We have repeatedly made it clear that we do not have any ambitions on Lebanese territory and do not want to control one cubic meter of its water nor an inch of its soil.

[Al-Husari] In a previous interview, you said that you view Lebanon as a "Syrian protectorate." Do you still hold the same view?

[Rabin] I do not believe that in its dealing with Syria, Lebanon has the freedom which the PLO used to enjoy in Jordan in terms of decisionmaking. They greatly rely on Syria's support in every step they make.

[Al-Husari] Have you begun to accept that as a fact?

[Rabin] Can I ignore facts?

[Al-Husari] In this case, is there is anything left to negotiate with Lebanon?

[Rabin] I believe that the Syrians have explicitly informed Christopher that the peace negotiations with Syria must be linked to the peace negotiations with Lebanon. They have asked that any solution to the problem between us and Syria be linked to any solution to the problem between us and Lebanon. It is not me who made that decision.

[Al-Husari] But you have no objection to that?

[Rabin] I wish I could object. I have to deal with realities and act accordingly.

[Al-Husari] After your return from al-'Aqabah, you stated that you understand that there are requirements which Israel has to honor if peace is to be reached with Syria. What are these requirements?

[Rabin] I do not believe it is wise to say more than what I have said on the four-part package. As long as there is a wide gap between us and Syria, I do not believe that I can explain how long these phases will take or what will happen during each of them or to what extent we will withdraw.

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[Al-Husari] Giving Jordan the upper hand in administering the Islamic holy places in the future is viewed, even by Israeli analysts, as a violation of the Declaration of Principles with the PLO. How can you deal with this contradiction?

[Rabin] I do not see any contradiction between our commitment to the Palestinians and the PLO on the one hand and the Washington Declaration on the other. What this declaration says is that we respect the situation that has been existing for 27 years now. The Islamic awqaf and the Higher Islamic Council are being financed by Jordan. King Husayn spent $10 million within two and a half years to gold-plate the Dome of the Rock. This is a reality, and we recognize Jordan's special role in administering the holy places. We said we would tackle the issue of Jerusalem in the final status negotiations, and we know that the Palestinians would raise the political, as well as the religious, status of Jerusalem. There is a large gap between our positions. We are determined to keep Jerusalem unified, Israel's capital, and under Israeli sovereignty. We also want to separate religious and political solutions. Regarding its religious status, [Jerusalem] will remain as it is now. Each church will administer its own affairs. The Islamic states or the Islamic world will determine who will administer the Islamic holy places. I believe there are four candidates for that: The Palestinians, Jordan, Saudi Arabia which considers itself a protector of the Islamic holy places, or King Hassan II of Morocco in his capacity as the chairman of the UN Jerusalem Commission. Let us wait and see.

[Al-Husari] Has King Husayn asked you to make this proposal?

[Rabin] I cannot discuss this for the time being. However, the proposal is ours.

[Al-Husari] You said you would hold a general referendum when you decide to carry out a considerable withdrawal from the Golan Heights. Will you do the same when Israel decides to withdraw from areas on the Jordanian-Israeli borders?

[Rabin] We do not talk about withdrawal from Jordan, but about fixing the international borders. The terms of reference, in accordance with the Armistice Agreement, are the previous borders between the mandate's border between Palestine and Transjordan. Borders will be demarcated by using old maps and matching them on the ground. Therefore, we are negotiating with Jordan to learn about the previous international borders between us.

[Al-Husari] With the border demarcation, Israel may have to relinquish territories it is occupying.

[Rabin] It is not a question of relinquishment of territories because there was no war. Maybe there are mistakes here and there regarding definitions.

[Al-Husari] Yasir 'Arafat has been ruling the Gaza Strip and Jericho for approximately seven weeks. How do you assess his rule so far?

[Rabin] For me and for him, I believe there are two main issues which can determine his success. From our viewpoint, and from his viewpoint too, I believe, there is first the continued terrorism by Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, which will prevent the arrival of investors and tourists and create problems for both him and Israel. We will not accept a situation in which the Palestinians do not do their best to prevent this terrorism. I am not here talking about the political differences among Hamas, the Islamic Jihad, and the PLO over the agreement with us so long as these are no more than political differences. The second issue is the fact that the PLO and the Palestinian Authority have not yet reached agreement with the donor states after long months of negotiations on a financial system that enjoys transparency and accountability. This issue is worrying us.

[Al-Husari] Do we understand that your assessment is negative?

[Rabin] No, I did not say it is negative. I modestly believe these are the two main issues.

[Al-Husari] You previously complained that the Palestinians have not yet discussed the elections issue. The Palestinians, however, say they are ready to hold these elections in December. Are you setting conditions for holding them?

[Rabin] During the negotiations held in Cairo last week and this week, the Palestinians raised the elections issue. We should negotiate on the details. If they are demanding the election of a 100-member legislative body, this conflicts with the Declaration of Principles because it provides for electing members for the Palestinian Authority, so we should be committed to this in the negotiations.

[Al-Husari] Are you setting a condition that the Palestine National Council [PNC] should hold a session in order to change the PLO charter prior to holding the elections?

[Rabin] When we negotiate on both elections and redeployment, which will precede elections, the Palestinians should fulfill their commitment to amending the PLO charter in a way that conforms to the new changes.

[Al-Husari] During the Cairo negotiations it was said that you reject holding elections before the charter is amended.

[Rabin] We were cited as saying that we refuse to allow the PNC members to come to Gaza. I discussed this with (Foreign Minister Shim'on) Peres. He later announced that we are ready to grant them permits to come.

[Al-Husari] To come in order to live here?

[Rabin] To come in order to attend the [PNC] meeting. I do not think that many of them want to live in Gaza.

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The PNC members are distributed in many places, and some of them are in Syria. I am not sure whether Nayif Hawatimah [secretary general of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine], for example, will come to live in Gaza.

[Al-Husari] Do you not think it is up to him to decide?

[Rabin] We agreed that they can attend the PNC meetings. This was the request submitted to us, and this was our answer.

[Al-Husari] Do you believe that some day Israel will be part of a Middle Eastern community, and are you seeking this?

[Rabin] Of course, we want to live in peace not only with the neighboring Arab states and the Palestinians but also with all Arab states from North Africa to the Arabian Peninsula. We also want to establish relations involving cultural and economic exchanges similar to the relations among the states which are living in peace.

Beilin Notes Readiness to Withdraw From Golan

LD2408095594 Helsinki Suomen Yleisradio Network in Finnish 0800 GMT 24 Aug 94

[Text] Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin has confirmed that Israel is prepared to withdraw from the occupied Golan region if Syria signs a peace treaty with Israel. However, Beilin did not specify whether Israel will undertake to hand over the entire Golan region to Syria in exchange for peace. Speaking at a news conference in Oslo, Deputy Foreign Minister Beilin said that a referendum will be held in Israel on the results of the negotiations concerning Golan.

Peres: All PNC Members Can Enter Gaza Freely

TA2308103994 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 23 Aug 94 pp A1, A10

[Report by Yerah Tal and Gay Bekhor]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres said yesterday, prior to his departure for Germany, that Israel insists on the repeal of Palestinian Covenant clauses which concern Israel. Peres noted that 27 or 29 of the 32 covenant clauses deal with Israel, and Israel demands that they be annulled; the PLO had pledged to do so, and had even announced that these clauses are practically invalid.

Peres further noted that at first 'Arafat maintained he could not convene the Palestine National Council [PNC] because no country would allow its members to convene on its soil. Peres said: "We told 'Arafat that we will not object to them convening in Gaza. Then they said: Just a moment, will you let everyone in? We said: Yes, we will let everyone in, including Jibril, Hawatimah, anyone who wants to enter. They asked: Will you let them in just this once? Because if you do, then we will seem to be convening in the shadow of an Israeli permit. We said: No, your people can enter whenever they please." Peres believed that 'Arafat will now make a sincere effort to convene the PNC. [passage omitted]

Shahal: Palestinian Police Deserve 'Highest Praise'

TA2308115794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] Police Minister Moshe Shahal visited the Jericho checkpoint this afternoon and met with Faruq Amin, the commander of the Palestinian police. Shahal was briefed on the cooperation between the Palestinian police and the Israeli border policemen as well as about several mishaps and misunderstandings.

At the end of the meeting, Minister Shahal said that the Palestinian police deserved the highest praise for its professional and operational capabilities. The police minister asserted that the level of cooperation with the Palestinian police would soon be expanded. This was reported by our correspondent Esti Perez.

IDF To Monitor Movement of Palestinian Police

TA2408062394 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 24 Aug 94

[Text] IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers in the Jericho area have been instructed to monitor and supervise the movement of Palestinian policemen from Jericho to the Gaza Strip. This, following numerous incidents in which policemen travelled between the two locations without receiving permission or arranging to be escorted by the security forces. Officers at the IDF's Central Command take a very serious view of this matter.

The commander of the Central Command has called for reinforcements in Judaea and Samaria in order to increase security in the area. This request will be raised this week during a meeting at the chief of staff's bureau. Large numbers of IDF soldiers were dispatched to Judaea and Samaria following the massacre at the Cave of the Patriarchs, but since then the scope of forces has been reduced by 30 percent. Several outposts in the area were dismantled in recent weeks.

Northern Command Chief on Plans To Combat Terrorism

NC2308195694 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1330 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] General Yitzhaq Mordekhay, the Israeli army's commander of the northern command, told our correspondent today: We have recently introduced radical changes to the plans for combating terrorism and to the tactics as well. But, he added, we cannot go into details in the media.

Mordekhay said: Let anyone who wants to harm the border area know that he will be confronted with extreme firmness and with new means that will be

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completely new to him. He stressed that the Israeli army will continue to give the necessary support to the South Lebanese Army in the future. He added that those who want to learn the ideal way of how people deal with each other should learn from the existing good relations between the inhabitants of the border area and Israel.

Accord Reached on Salary Payments to Palestinians

TA1808183394 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1800 GMT 18 Aug 94

[Text] As of October, the wages and social benefits of all laborers from the territories who work in Israel will be paid directly into their bank accounts. Our correspondent Ya'el Ayalon reports that the autonomy authority and the Labor and Social Welfare Ministry also agreed that all laborers who arrive from the Gaza Strip will receive their wages at Bank of Palestine branches in the Strip and that any laborer who has not yet opened an account in this bank will have to do so soon. Our correspondent has learned from the Labor and Social Welfare Ministry that the new arrangement will greatly shorten the process of salary payments and will allow proper control of money transfers.

Four Soldiers Wounded in Bethlehem Grenade Attack

TA2308190494 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Video report by Yoram Kohen]

[Excerpt] Four soldiers were lightly injured this afternoon when a hand grenade was hurled into the courtyard of the Civil Administration building in Bethlehem. Our correspondent Yoram Kohen has returned from the scene:

Terrorist attacks against the Civil Administration base in Bethlehem are not a new occurrence. This afternoon's attack was apparently carried out by a lone terrorist who came out of the alley at the base's rear side. He reached the center of the courtyard at the base's southeast end and threw a grenade at the soldiers' tents. The fragmentation grenade hit the second tent in the line and four soldiers sustained shrapnel wounds, including a medic who treated his injured comrades. We were told that this was not the first time terrorist attacks against soldiers had taken place in this area. [passage omitted]

France Lifts Objection to Inclusion in EU Projects

TA2008170194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 20 Aug 94

[Text] A major impediment to Israel's integration into the European Union has been removed. Our correspondent in Europe Gil Sadan has learned that France recently lifted its objection to granting Israel the status of full partner in EU research and development projects. French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur officially informed Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin of the decision.

This step paves the way for an impending decision by the EU's Council of Ministers to grant Israel an equivalent status in research and development projects to that of countries which belong to Europe's free trade zone, but are still not members of the EU.

Arab MK Seeking Meeting With Iraqi UN Ambassador

TA2408050094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0405 GMT 24 Aug 94

[Text] Knesset Member [MK] 'Abd-al-Wahhab Darawshah [Arab Democratic Party] is trying to incorporate Iraq into the peace process and may meet with Nizar Hamdun, the Iraqi ambassador to the United Nations, at the end of the week. MK Darawshah is currently visiting the United States. Our correspondent in Washington Arye Golan reports:

[Begin recording] [Golan] Although MK Darawshah explained that he was on a private visit, he also scheduled meetings with Dan Kurtzer and Aaron Miller, who are both members of the U.S. peace team, as well as with Arab ambassadors, Israeli Ambassador Itamar Rabinovich, and leaders of Jewish and Arab organizations. Above all, however, Darawshah believes that even Iraq should be drawn into the circle of Middle East peace.

[Darawshah] I call for a lifting of the boycott against Iraq and its inclusion and integration into the peace process. This could also promote the process with Syria and Lebanon and help achieve a comprehensive peace in the region.

[Golan] Does Saddam Husayn, who fired 40 missiles at Israel, deserve this?

[Darawshah] I think that whoever wants to reach peace must forget painful memories in the past. Saddam Husayn also has to forget the bombing of his nuclear reactor. I think that at a time of peace, one should talk peace and not only about past grievances. We must overcome past grievances and look directly toward the future.

[Golan] Do you bring any message from Iraq to the U.S. Administration?

[Darawshah] No. I am not bringing any messages. I did not meet any Iraqi officials so I have nothing to bring but if I meet Nizar Hamdun, and I will request such a meeting, and I will convey a message to the Americans or even to Israel. At the moment, I am not bringing any messages from any party but as always I will try to get things moving.

[Golan] MK Darawshah's visit to the United States will last approximately one week. [end recording]

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Sharon Warns Against Concessions to Jordan

TA1908085494 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (LESHABAT supplement) in Hebrew 12 Aug 94 pp 12, 20

[Article by Likud Knesset Member Ari'el Sharon: "Your Majesty, You Are Over Me Now"]

[Text] The festivities are over. The time has come to pay the bill. The tuxedos are back in the closet. The two charming girls, Zohar and Nancy, are back at school. The other parts of the stage setting, and we were all part of the setting, went each on their separate ways. The bereaved families went back to their bitter agony. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] generals placed the Jordanian souvenirs with the others at home.

A perfect show. Perfect timing for the Knesset for the session last week, the time it ended, stopping air traffic to Israel, the passage here of King Husayn's plane, the cheers: "Your Majesty [last two words in English], you are over me now," (what a symbolic expression). The Arabic speakers whispered with trembling voices: Jalalat al-malik, jalalat al-malik al-'aziz [your majesty the king, your dear majesty the king]. The Jews love a king, especially if he is a foreign king.

The Jordanians were friendly but reserved, polite but did not go out of their way, courteous and pleasant but not overly excited, displaying dignified conduct, worthy of being envied.

As always in the face of foreigners, our brothers make fools of themselves. Chocked with excitement, they yell in hoarse voices: "Shalom. Salam. Long Live the King! Long Live Rabin!" Their boats already hoist Jordanian flags. There were no Israeli flags on the Jordanian boats.

They have dignity. They understand the value of a symbol. They do know that a nation cannot exist without symbols.

Our conduct has a price. The more self-control we lose, avoid displaying some restraint; not reserve some self- and national pride, the more we pay. And even if we attain peace, we will lose it. But who can stop the party?

The government has a vested interest in showing off achievements to counter its failures. A government that has not built a single apartment, that knowingly destroyed the Israeli agriculture, that made aliyah stop, must celebrate in the 'Arava, dine in al-'Aqabah, sail the Royal Yacht through the Gulf of Elat.

And the price is high.

We all want peace, but do we know the price the Jordanians are demanding of us? So far they have raised four main demands:

—An official status on Temple Mount. A recognition of "Jordan's special historic role on Temple Mount," the place that has been the most sacred for the Jewish people for the past 4,000 years, Mount Moriya. "On matters of religion, precedent is what counts," a senior cabinet minister has reiterated. Absolutely true: Jerusalem is our capital only thanks to the Temple Mount. On Passover night we say "Next Year in Built Jerusalem" only because of Temple Mount. We settled in Israel—not in Uganda or Argentina—because of Temple Mount; because of "Eretz Tziyon Yerushalayim" as the words of our national anthem go.

Wherever a Jew prays, he turns to Temple Mount. Wherever a Muslim prays, he turns to Mecca, even when he is on Temple Mount.

He who has agreed to forsake full control over Temple Mount is, in fact, mentally ready to really give up on everything.

We did not have Temple Mount in our hands before 1967, but than we never stopped aspiring to one day repossess it. "Temple Mount is ours, though we are not yet holding it," I used to tell my late son Gur, when he was still a child, while climbing up Mount Zion and longingly looking at Temple Mount.

This is why the most important result of the 6-Days War was not the conquering of the Sinai or the Golan Heights, but our return to our sacred place. Then, we truly touched history.

—The Jordanians demand that 800,000 Palestinian refugees return to Judaea and Samaria. When those 1967 refugees, who really are 1948 refugees, return to the poor and deserted refugee camps and see the graves of their forefathers, their lands and fields, they will only hate us more.

—Jordan demands 313 million cubic meters of water from us, one-sixth of the total quantity of Israel's water, 27 million cubic meters of this in the 'Arava, which is 60 percent of the water we use for farming there.

Jordan's demand is part of the general Arab demand of us—the Syrian, Lebanese, and the Palestinian demand of a total of 1.2 billion cubic meters of water, which is two-thirds of the maximal quantity of Israeli water. In between one feast and another, Israel might give up on this too. A small, unnecessary gesture was made in al-'Aqabah. The prime minister generously and chivalrously tilted his jug and showered his hosts with 4 million cubic meters of water. This amount of water is enough to support four Israeli moshavim.

—Jordan demands 386 square km in the 'Arava (a territory larger than the Gaza Strip) and a smaller territory in the area of Naharayim in the north. The government will pay another visit and fold in again.

This reminds me of President Yeltsin's visit to Japan. In his distress, he asked his hosts for $2 billion in aid. The Japanese made giving the sum conditional on the return of the Island of Sakhalin which the Russians took without a fight at the end of World War II. A small,

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barren, god-forsaken piece of land. And despite his grave hardships, Yeltsin said: "Do you really believe that I could even consider returning Russian land?" and went back home empty handed.

Additional demands will certainly be made, and the government will accept them because with us peace has stopped being a means and has become an end in itself. Our prime minister and foreign minister are the only statesmen in the world and in history for whom peace is the end and national interests are the means with which they are willing to pay for it. This creates an absurd situation in which, whenever peace comes under a threat or is difficult to attain, Israel will make an additional concession of some historic, national, or security asset—as is happening today.

Where are they leading us? When will we ever be a normal nation?

Writer: Government 'Playing for Time' in Lebanon

TA2108143794 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (LESHABAT supplement) in Hebrew 12 Aug 94 pp 12, 13, 14

[Article by Ron Ben-Yishay: "Why Is Israel Holding Back?"]

[Text] It is difficult to believe that it is the same government, the same defense minister, and the same chief of staff who sent the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] to carry out "Operation Accountability" one year ago.

On 6 August, Hizballah fighters fired approximately 20 katyusha rockets at the western Galilee. Three Israeli children, all members of the same family, were slightly injured. The beaches north of Nahariyya emptied. On the same day, a Giv'ati company commander and a soldier were killed in a clash with Hizballah "Majmua'" in the security zone. Israel's reaction, however, was the epitome of restraint and self-control.

The IDF spokesman announced that SLA [South Lebanese Army] and IDF artillery had retaliated by fiercely shelling Hizballah bases, but Lebanese news agencies did not report any casualties or damage, which clearly indicates that Israel's reaction was anemic and merely perfunctory. Even the hysterical reports from Lebanon about the reinforcement of IDF troops in the security zone proved to be groundless. What really happened was the complete opposite. Yitzhaq Mordekhay, the head of the Northern Command, went out of his way to calm the sector.

Following the 7 August cabinet session, an official source told correspondents that the prime minister and chief of staff believed that the katyusha shelling was Hizballah's retaliation for the Israel Air Force's [IAF] misdirected air raid [against a Lebanese village] on 4 August.

Prime Minister Rabin and Chief of Staff Baraq repeatedly stressed that Israel had apologized to the Lebanese Government for killing seven innocent Lebanese civilians and wounding 17 others in the village of Dayr al-Zahrani. They assessed that Hizballah would make do with Saturday's shelling and would not fire additional katyushas at Israeli territory. Their statements could be taken to imply that Israel had a certain degree of understanding of Hizballah's motives and hoped that the Shiite organization would not go too far and force Israel to react more strongly. To be on the safe side, Rabin asked Secretary of State Warren Christopher on Saturday evening to talk to Syrian President al-Asad so that the latter would make sure that Hizballah had really settled down.

What was the reason for this conciliatory restraint? Was it a guilty conscience because of the IAF's mistake? Was it because Rabin did not want to spoil the festive atmosphere in the 'Arava and ruin Christopher's trip to Damascus? One can safely assume that these considerations also played a part. According to some of the decisionmakers in the government and the IDF, however, this was a strategic decision tied to the negotiations with Syria, which are currently gathering momentum.

Al-Asad is demanding that the United States and Israel accept Syria's domination in Lebanon as a fait accompli. The Syrian president is also insisting that Israel pull its forces out of the security zone and withdraw to the international border.

One can assume that among the cabinet ministers, and even among the ranks of the General Staff, such a demand would not necessarily be rejected out of hand. Israel has already said that it has no territorial claims in Lebanon and is prepared to leave the security zone. Rabin believes that al-Asad is the only one who can impose his will in Lebanon. Thus, there will probably be a discussion of al-Asad's demands.

There are numerous indications that Syria and its satellite, Lebanon, are ready to make a deal in which the Golan Heights and south Lebanon will be part of one package. That is why Rabin does not care right now if Hizballah feels it won the latest round, if Israel's restraint is perceived as a sign of weakness in Lebanon, and if the Israeli opposition claims that he is forsaking the IDF, as well as Israeli citizens.

Officials in Jerusalem now believe that the Lebanese problem will be resolved in the framework of a comprehensive agreement with Syria. And, since there is a reasonable chance of reaching an agreement—or at least a declaration of principles—with Syria within five or six months, there is no point in shedding blood and wasting resources in Lebanon. Neither is there any point in paying a domestic political price if Hizballah were to intensify its activity against the residents of the Galilee. Israel has to play for time and get through this interim period in Lebanon without katyusha rockets, which could disrupt daily life and scare off tourism in the Galilee, and with a minimum of SLA and IDF casualties in the security zone.

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The question is whether or not Syria, and especially Hizballah, will be prepared to play by these rules. The signs so far indicate that this is not the case. Syria finds Hizballah's painful attacks, which cause casualties and undermine the fortitude of Israel's northern residents, convenient during the negotiations. Hizballah, which has accumulated a great deal of political and military power in south Lebanon in recent years, will not give up this power easily.

The organization's leaders in Beirut have realized that in order to carry out an Islamic revolution in Lebanon, they must become a political force. In order to achieve this objective, they must recruit the support of approximately 1 million Shiites who live south of the al-Awwali River.

Hizballah employed the classic method used by all fundamentalist Islamic movements to gain political support. It arranged for Iranian funding and, within a short time, had established an infrastructure of roads, schools, clinics, hospitals, and model welfare services in the almost devastated southern part of the country. The Shiite population, which was in need of these services, accepted Hizballah's presentation of itself as its sole representative, just as it agreed to support the military arm of the organization. Thus, within approximately 18 months, Hizballah became the master in south Lebanon, effectively transforming it into a base for its increasing political and military power in Lebanon.

It fears losing this base now. Hizballah knows that danger looms from two directions: either by the signing of a Syrian-Israeli agreement or by the south Lebanese population turning against it for some reason. Hizballah cannot do much to foil an agreement between Damascus and Jerusalem. It can heat up the northern border and try to elicit a violent reaction from Israel on occasion; however, Hizballah understands and even admits openly that if Syria and Israel reach an agreement on the Golan Heights, it will mean an end to the military freedom the organization presently enjoys.

That is why Hizballah is preparing a political option: to seize control of Lebanon by taking over parliament, much as the fundamentalist movements in Algeria and Jordan attempted to do. In order to win the elections, however, it must maintain and even widen its public support. Hizballah is therefore walking a very thin line. On one hand, Hizballah and its Iranian patrons would like to increase terrorist activity to the maximum in order to undermine the peace process, but, on the other hand, it very much fears an Israeli retaliation which could enrage local villagers, as was the case during "Operation Accountability."

The training areas and logistic rear of Hizballah's military arm, which numbers approximately 1,000 fighters under the command of Khalil al-Hajj, are situated in Lebanon's al-Biqa'. Their weapons and sophisticated equipment are delivered from Iran through Syria (under tight Syrian supervision). Their training is supervised by several dozen members of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards who stayed in al-Biqa' after the Syrians sent most of them home.

The quality of their training and their operational capabilities have not been harmed. On the contrary, Hizballah has drawn the appropriate conclusions and stopped carrying out spectacular suicide missions. Today, the organization does all it can to avoid head-on clashes with the IDF. Its men carry out "ambushes" from a distance, making maximum use of rockets and mortar fire in order to limit the number of their casualties. If there are casualties, the Hizballah fighters do not leave the bodies behind but drag the corpses with them as they retreat, even at a risk to their own lives.

A task force, or "majmua'," normally numbering about 20 men, is formed before every operation. The modus operandi used in the attacks on enemy outposts was virtually copied from IDF instruction manuals, which in the past were translated for the Iranian Army under the shah. The Hizballah squads know how to collect field intelligence and make use of local villagers for this purpose.

Prior to the mission, they practice on a model. The fighters almost always attack from several directions using diversionary tactics and isolating the zone of fire. It is no coincidence that the number of IDF fatalities in clashes with Hizballah is constantly on the rise. The improvement in Hizballah's fighting ability and weaponry, as well as its fighters' familiarity with the difficult terrain, are bringing results.

This machine of guerrilla warfare needs the villagers, however, in order to function smoothly. If it could, Hizballah would be happy to abandon its bases in the Shiite villages abutting the security zone, even if only to maintain the political support of the local populace. Hizballah is keenly aware, however, that deploying in the barren, unpopulated areas of southern Lebanon would make easy prey of its fighters. Israeli intelligence would have no difficulty monitoring their movements and positions, and they would be exposed to attacks by the IAF and by the IDF's artillery and special units. They would also find it difficult to continue to receive the supplies and logistical support that the Shiite villagers extend to Hizballah, willingly or not.

The Hizballah activists take care not to antagonize the villagers. After "Operation Accountability," Hizballah established a special fund, with Iranian money, to compensate villagers who had been harmed. Today, when Hizballah needs a house to station a lookout post or for setting up an ambush, it rents it in the accepted fashion. Its fighters try not to operate during the harvest and sowing seasons, so that IDF artillery fire does not burn the ripe crops in the fields. Hizballah also tries to tone down its activity when matriculation exams are being held, so that students can be tested by teachers and inspectors who bring the exams from Beirut. Hizballah has actually set up a kind of "village line," which follows

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its rules, facing the line of SLA and IDF outposts in the northern part of the security zone.

Several months ago, Hizballah tried to wear down the SLA by attacking outposts and firing katyusha rockets at Christian settlements. It quickly realized, however, that this would not make Israel budge from the security zone. Hizballah then began operating directly against the IDF in the security zone and is exploiting what it regards as a violation of the understandings reached following "Operation Accountability" in order to launch katyusha rockets at the Galilee. The shift came in June, following the abduction of Mustafa al-Dirani and the IAF bombing of the Hizballah trainee base in Nab' al-Dardarah. The motivation behind the change is a combination of a yearning for revenge and a desire to improve its modus operandi.

The IDF tried to uproot Hizballah from its village line during "Operation Accountability." The pressure exerted by the IAF and IDF artillery on the local population and the Lebanese Government was designed to compel Hizballah to relocate its activity and move its bases into the open. The operation almost succeeded, but international pressure forced Israel to compromise and halt the operation prematurely. The understandings reached with Syria through U.S. mediation boomeranged and now significantly restrict the IDF's freedom of action.

Thus, for example, according to the understandings reached after "Operation Accountability," IDF artillery is prohibited from firing at a cluster of houses inside a village, because innocent Lebanese may be harmed. Therefore, even if IDF officers have a clear view of Hizballah mortar crews operating between those houses, they must bite their lips and refrain from taking action. Of course, a tank is capable of scoring a direct hit, but it first has to see the target. What if the artillery is stationed in the backyard?

One can also send in gunships with rockets, but by the time the helicopters arrive and pinpoint the enemy artillery, they have already collected their equipment and vanished. The SLA and IDF's retaliatory shelling of empty fields between the villages is ineffective at best. The same is true of the IAF bombing raids, which mainly destroy rocks and bushes.

The military's helplessness and the tangle of political constraints are a cause of frustration. This frustration makes one look for a scapegoat. Some of the cabinet ministers, for example, suspect Major General Yitzhaq Mordekhay, the commander of the Northern Command, who is a known activist, of occasionally trying to heat up the sector in order to strike at Hizballah.

The research done for this article indicates that Gen. Mordekhay is being extra careful. He knows that the political echelons want quiet, and he delivers. (It is no secret that the head of the Northern Command has his eyes set on the position of deputy chief of staff). In addition, Mordekhay is well aware of the restrictions imposed on the way he can operate the forces at his disposal by the understandings made in the wake of "Operation Accountability." Therefore, he tries not to start anything he cannot see through to a successful end.

The bottom line of this story is that today Hizballah, with Syria's encouragement, is capable of foiling Israel's plans to attain an agreement on Lebanese issues; it is calling the shots. Several more IDF fatalities in the security zone, several more rounds of katyushas on the Galilee, and the Jerusalem decisionmakers will have to take action.

Hizballah's main and almost only vulnerable point is the rural population. Hence, the most effective method of operation at the IDF's disposal is to conduct a revised version of "Operation Accountability" aimed at changing the ruthless rules of the game once again.

Some believe that there is no need to strike with full force. It would be enough, they argue, to choose a village which clearly serves as a Hizballah base, distribute leaflets there demanding that the inhabitants evacuate it within 48 hours, and then have the artillery shell it. The inhabitants' flight would deliver the desired message to Hizballah and the Lebanese Government and would allow a discussion of a new arrangement. If this were to fail, the IDF would use the same method against another village, and so on.

Israel would have to pay a price for this, however. Hizballah would undoubtedly retaliate by firing katyushas at the Galilee. In such a case, the IDF and the residents of the north would have to be physically and mentally ready for the escalation. Israel will be able to use this method of operation only if the political echelons reach the conclusion that they can demand that the residents of the north sit in shelters for days and weeks. Otherwise, there is no point in even starting this. At the moment, it seems that the political echelons are far from reaching this conclusion.

The IDF, therefore, should exhaust all the technology and tactical means at its disposal. It can expand the scope of operation of the special units working in the Shiite villages bordering on the security zone and the open spaces between them. Such activity goes on today as well, but it is very incidental. Just as the IDF set up undercover units to deal with the problem of Palestinian fugitives in the territories, it can find an original tactical solution to the Hizballah problem.

Intelligence gathering and early warning mechanisms in the field can and should be expanded immediately. Millions of shekels should be invested in reinforcing the outposts and the vehicles used by the soldiers to travel through the mountainous trails. An investment of additional forces and means, even if for only a short period, may well be worth it. This could free the political echelons from deciding to employ more drastic means. It would also give Rabin the political room to maneuver vis-a-vis Syria that he will need in the coming months.

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Russian Envoy Posuvalyuk Arrives, Makes Statement

JN2308104294 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1000 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] Viktor Posuvalyuk, director of the Middle East and North Africa Department at the Russian Foreign Ministry and personal envoy of Russian President Boris Yeltsin, arrived this morning in Amman via the al-Ramtha border point on a visit to Jordan during which he will meet with a number of senior officials.

In a statement to the Jordanian News Agency upon arrival, Posuvalyuk said he is conducting this Middle Eastern tour under the instructions of the Russian president. He noted that Jordan is the third leg of this tour after having visited Lebanon and Syria.

He added that his mission in Jordan is divided into two parts. The first is aimed at discussing bilateral relations within the framework of mutual eagerness to reinforce these relations and the second is aimed at discussing the issues of the peace process from the Jordanian point of view and discussing the stage which this process has reached.

Posuvalyuk welcomed the Washington Declaration between Jordan and Israel. He said that Moscow considers this declaration an important step on the road to ending the Arab-Israeli conflict and an achievement that demonstrates strong momentum on the Jordanian track.

Responding to a question about the Syrian track of the peace negotiations, he said that the Russian Government considers the Syrian track an essential issue.

Deputy Prime Minister Receives Envoy

JN2308182094 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1600 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] Acting Prime Minister Dhuqan al-Hindawi conferred with the director of the Middle East Department at the Russian Foreign Ministry, Viktor Posuvaluk, who is currently on a visit to Jordan. Mr. al-Hindawi reviewed with the Russian official the outcome of his current tour to the region, that included Lebanon and Syria, as well as the latest peace developments. The acting premier asserted that developments on the Jordanian-Israeli track are considered as steps towards achieving a comprehensive and just peace, and would contribute positively to the advancement of peace.

The Russian envoy affirmed that his country has welcomed the Washington Declaration between Jordan and Israel as being an important step and achievement on that peace process.

Prime Minister To Deliver Lecture on Peace in U.S.

JN2308124194 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1100 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] The Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali has left Amman for the United States on a several-day visit. The visit comes upon an invitation from the RAND Foundation on Political Research. Premier al-Majali wants to deliver a lecture at the foundation dealing with peace and the aftermath of peace in the Middle East.

Prior to his departure, Dr. al-Majali spoke to Radio Jordan reporter As'ad Abu-al-Layl:

[Begin al-Majali recording] My visit is to the United States of America. RAND Corporation, which is a well known think tank on the western shore of the United States of America which is in Los Angeles, invited His Royal Highness Prince Hasan to give an address for their annual meeting. His royal highness' time did not allow him to be able to go and give this address. So, he asked me to do that on his behalf and I am going to do that.

In the same time, I am going to give another lecture to the World Affairs Council of Los Angeles, which is a very famous society organization. And the whole issue is to put Jordan's image in front of all decision makers and thinkers around the world, especially in the United States of America. [end recording]

Al-Majali on U.S. Visit, Peace Process

JN2308183394 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali left Amman at noon today on a visit to the United States during which he will deliver, on behalf of Crown Prince Hasan, several lectures on developments in the peace process in the region, as well as Jordan's role in it. Before leaving, Dr. al-Majali spoke to journalists about his visit:

[Begin recording] [Correspondent George Haddad] In statements to journalists before his departure, the prime minister talked about the nature of this visit. He said:

[Al-Majali] The visit comes at the invitation of the RAND Corporation, the largest think tank, political, and strategic corporation in California, which had invited his highness the crown prince to give a lecture on peace and the post-peace era, particularly on economic issues. Due to his preoccupation, his highness the crown prince asked me to do that, and I am going to carry out this mission by giving a lecture at this corporation. In fact, this is part of a conference held from time to time to discuss peace and related economic issues. I would like to say that in addition to giving a lecture at the RAND Corporation, I will give another lecture at the International Affairs Institute in Los Angeles, a well-known institute dealing with political issues.

[Haddad] Dr. al-Majali said that the picture Jordan has portrayed should be perpetual—a picture which His Majesty King Husayn has made a foundation for Jordan's policies and march. Our duty, he said, is to continue to move in this direction to entrench this picture, as well as Jordan's message, so that the world's positive view of Jordan's positions and moves can

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remain strong. Regarding the possibility of holding meetings with U.S. officials, Dr. al-Majali said:

[Al-Majali] I do not believe there is any possibility for that, but if this happens, it will be accidental. However, I have no such arrangement.

[Haddad] Asked on the progress of the Jordanian-Israeli negotiations, the prime minister said:

[Al-Majali] It is natural that negotiations on any simple issue need time and efforts. One day, you will see the way paved and another day, you will see an obstacle that you will try to remove. This is the nature of negotiations. Some time ago, people believed that the road was blocked and that we were doing nothing but normalizing relations. This a flagrant mistake. In fact, we are tackling substantive issues, and as they are substantive, they take time. Regarding border demarcation, time is needed to learn about the location of every mark and every coordinate on the ground. It is not like opening a telephone line or shaking hands. We should know this fact. The same applies to the issue of water. What is important is the substantive issues, as well as full cooperation between the two sides to resolve them.

[Haddad] Regarding the final statement issued by the Jordanian- Palestinian meeting that ended yesterday, the prime minister said that we and the Palestinians are brothers and maintain strong relations, which cannot be affected by any difference of viewpoints on some controversial issues. Discussion of these issues and how to deal with them to eliminate differences are under way. Asked on the economic relations between Jordan and the United States, Dr. al-Majali said:

[Al-Majali] They are very good relations. They [the Americans] fulfilled their promises. They also took an unprecedented measure in the U.S. legislative history when they passed a law very quickly to write off the debts. The rapidness with which they acted, however, was due to the fact that the financial year was nearing an end. Therefore, they acted quickly and also informed other creditor states to follow suit and write off their debts on Jordan. The relationship is good in this regard, and economic relations are even better. A Jordanian committee purchased wheat, barley, rice, and milk at reduced and very good prices. This is also considered support for Jordan and its economy.

[Haddad] Dr. al-Majali was seen off at the airport by Deputy Prime Minister Dhuqan al-Hindawi, several ministers, the Jordanian ambassador in Washington, and several senior officials. [end recording]

Palestinian Delegation Departs Amman

JN2308123794 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] A Palestinian self-rule delegation, headed by Minister of Culture Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, and including Minister of Education Yasir 'Amr and Interior Ministry Under Secretary Ahmad Bayyud al-Tamimi, left Amman today for Jericho via the King Husayn Bridge after two days of Jordanian-Palestinian talks concluded in Amman yesterday. During their meetings, the two sides discussed bilateral ties and various issues of mutual interest.

Proposals Made to PNA on Economic Agreement

JN2408070694 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 24 Aug 94 p 1, 7

[Report by staff correspondent Nirmin Murad]

[Text] Amman—Jordan has given the Palestine National Authority (PNA) "specific proposals" on ways to conduct future economic and monetary relations which the Kingdom hopes will be studied by the Palestinian side ahead of the next meeting in early September.

These proposals, a senior official told the JORDAN TIMES, although not in lieu of an economic accord between the two sides, were in fact elements that Jordan wants to see incorporated into the agreement so that it would be upgraded to a more technical and serious level. He did not reveal the details of the proposals.

Jordan, the official said, "was not disappointed" that Jordanian- Palestinian meetings on Sunday and Monday did not produce a signing of the Jordanian-Palestinian economic agreement because the Kingdom was seeking to update the pact from its previously general form to a more technical and specific one.

"We want to update the pact and get way more specific," another official said also on condition of anonymity. "We are not in a hurry at all."

Jordan and the Palestinians have twice drafted an economic pact to govern their future cooperation, in January and in April, but the Palestinians have stalled over the signing of the accord because of articles in that agreement, among other things, which give the Central Bank of Jordan authority on the operation of banks in the West Bank and Gaza, something that the Palestinians felt took away from the symbols of their sovereignty.

The accord, a one and a half page summary of objectives, remained a source of continued uneasiness between the two sides after it first became apparent that the Palestinians were not ready to commit themselves to its general guidelines.

While the Palestinian delegates who held talks here this week were still not mandated from their leadership to conclude any agreements, the Jordanians say that they found a new sense of "pragmatism and commitment" from the Palestinian side.

"They arrived with a new conciliatory tone that was apparently a result of dealing with the reality on the ground in the occupied territories," one official told the JORDAN TIMES.

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Privately, officials add, Palestinian delegates "did not have all the economic knowledge to conduct the kind of technical negotiations that were needed before any agreement can be reached and signed."

"This is why we have given them written and specific proposals which can be studied by the Palestinian economists and we will hopefully be able to discuss them in more detail during the next meeting," the official said.

During the two-day meetings, according to the Jordanian officials, many of the Palestinian questions and grievances were addressed "hopefully satisfactorily."

One of the Palestinian delegation's main concerns, according to sources, was Jordan's "dealing with the Palestinian self-rule authority as if it is only in charge of Gaza and Jericho and not an authority that would expand to cover the whole West Bank."

This grievance is apparently in reference to the Kingdom's agreement with Israel to export $30 million in consumer goods to the West Bank areas outside the self-rule authority.

"We realise that this must be upsetting to them, but it is necessary for us to do that because this is what their own agreement with Israel has produced," a senior official said.

"We told them that we can only deal with the development on the Palestinian front stage by stage," he added, explaining that the reason Jordan had to gain the permission of Israel to export ceramics, for example, "is because the Palestinian self-rule authority cannot provide Jordan with an import licence or open the entry points for Jordanian exports."

"We can understand their grievance but this is also the reality that they had created," the official added.

Jordan's main message to the Palestinian side, according to officials, was that they see their meetings with each other as one aimed at addressing the mapping of a future that will reflect on the two sides equally.

"We told them we are not negotiating with them, we are only trying to do the things that have to be done," one official said.

But the more important result of the meetings, held after months of uneasy relations, was in laying the grounds and hopefully allaying the fears that have so far hindered Palestinian coordination with Jordan.

The fact that the members of the cabinet-level Palestinian delegation "were more politicians than economists" is because they appeared to be "assessing the political atmosphere ahead of a higher meeting between His Majesty King Husayn and President Yasir 'Arafat," one Jordanian official said.

The Palestinian delegation apparently had told the Jordanian side that they wanted final agreements to be signed by Mr. 'Arafat himself. Because of this message, Jordanian officials believe a summit between the Jordanian and Palestinian leaders will only come after the joint committee paves the road for a successful visit, probably after the next meeting in September.

The Jordanian side believes that it might have been successful at laying to rest what they say are "unsubstantiated fears" towards Jordanian intentions whether over the issue of Jerusalem or on trade and banks.

"The overall feeling we got, as Jordanian delegates to this meeting, is that there is a lot Jordan can do to facilitate the task of the Palestinian self-rule authority," the senior official said.

"Also we feel that any difficulties they may have in handling their affairs, whether internally or with international donors, are problems that affect us as well and with which we have had experience, as a state, which we could impart on them," he said.

Editorial Voices Optimism Over Talks With PLO

JN2208101194 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 22 Aug 94 pp 1, 25

[Editorial: "On the Jordanian-Palestinian Relationship"]

[Text] We used to believe, and still believe, that the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship is one of common destiny, whose roots can be traced deep down to the first [Islamic] conquest and whose offshoots exist on the banks of the holy Jordan River.

Proceeding from this, we understand His Majesty King Husayn's remarks to DER SPIEGEL, published today, about the relationship between the Hashemites and Jerusalem. This relationship existed long before the creation of Israel and long before the establishment of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Rescuing Jerusalem from the Zionist ambitions in 1948 to become the medium of unity between the two banks in 1950 was a vivid indication of the historic and eternal relationship between Jordan and Palestine in good and bad times, now and in the future.

Based on this, we may understand King Husayn's talk with the magazine about the need to make a distinction between protecting the holy places and political differences. Protecting the holy places is the duty of the one in charge of Muslims' affairs. Political differences are bound to be resolved, sooner or later, thanks to this one-destiny relationship.

Therefore, Jordan has been the first to lend support to the Palestinian brethren, sharing their agonies and dreams throughout the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict and respecting their free decision within the context of this relationship.

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In light of this, we look forward to the success of the Jordanian-Palestinian talks, currently in progress in Amman, away from harmful tension, as the prime minister put it at the commencement of these talks.

Though long overdue, we were heartened to see the two sides heading toward unifying the Jordanian and Palestinian stand vis-a-vis the issues that must be discussed with the Israeli side.

Finally, we agree with the view that the entangled and complicated situation has contributed to complicating some practical issues between the Jordanian and Palestinian sides economically, politically, administratively, and technically. But, we believe that a large delegation from both sides covering all areas of specialization is capable of boosting the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship and enabling it to live up to the peace challenges, foremost of which is Israel's intransigence and procrastination in returning rights to their Palestinian and Jordanian owners.

Paper Lauds 'Fraternal' Dialogue With Palestinians

JN2308190594 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 23 Aug 94 pp 1, 21

[Editorial: "Refreshing the Fraternal Dialogue Between Jordan and the Palestinian Leadership"]

[Text] The Jordanian-Palestinian meetings, held in Amman over the past two days, have emphasized an essential fact which Jordan has long called for and adhered to; namely, the need for both continuity and continued coordination in order to discuss the common issues reflecting the special Jordanian-Palestinian relations.

Under its Hashemite leadership, Jordan has committed itself, for long decades, to consolidating these relations based on Jordan's pan-Arab principles. Thus, Jordan has constantly supported the Palestinian people's cause with its utmost capabilities. His Majesty King Husayn summed up this commitment in his statement to the German magazine DER SPIEGEL the day before yesterday. Those who pretend to forget things should be reminded that no other Arab state has offered to the Palestine question what Jordan offered and that others have not suffered for our brothers the way we have willingly suffered.

The Amman meetings did not yield tangible results on the main, important, and interrelated issues listed on the agenda. These issues need detailed discussions and numerous meetings. However, the positive atmosphere of the meetings has actually refreshed the fraternal and responsible dialogue between the two sides, especially after the temporary estrangement resulting from the quick developments on the Palestinian-Israeli track and later on the Jordanian-Israeli track in the past few months. Hence, each side had to be briefed on the phases of negotiations with Israel.

The joint media statement read out by Information Minister Dr. Jawad al-'Anani in the joint news conference [with Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, minister of culture in the Palestinian National Authority] has expressed this fact by saying that bilateral coordination has become a clear necessity because the peace process is moving quickly and affecting the positions of both sides. This requires continued consideration of the common issues which are of interest to people and which facilitate their movement and dealings with one another.

In this regard, it is worthwhile to note the accelerating developments and interactions in the Palestinian arena since the Palestinian National Authority took over power in the self-rule areas, as well as their repercussions on Jordanian-Palestinian relations. This requires contacts and continued dialogue. Thus, the two sides agreed to set up a joint committee which will meet monthly to discuss the issues of interest to both fraternal parties and peoples.

There is no tension in the Jordanian-Palestinian relations. This was confirmed by the prime minister after chairing the first bilateral meeting the day before yesterday. Bilateral relations are deep and historic, and there are promising prospects for further joint action in the future.

During the joint news conference, Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, head of the Palestinian delegation, asserted that there are no differences between Jordan and Palestine over the Jerusalem issue and that ending the occupation of this holy city is a common objective. This remark is commendable. Jordan has frequently explained this matter, especially after the misunderstanding shown by the Palestinian side following the Washington Declaration. This declaration emphasized a historic and contemporary fact; namely, Jordan's care for the holy places in Jerusalem. The Hashemites' relationship with Jerusalem and its holy places existed before the establishment of both Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Moreover, Jordan is not competing with the PLO for Jerusalem. This was frequently stressed by His Majesty King Husayn. Jordan recognizes the Palestinian political sovereignty over Jerusalem, and has deferred the discussions on it to the final phase of the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

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Dallul Expects Christopher To Bring New Proposals

NC2308170894 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] Minister of National Defense Muhsin Dallul today said that every time an international envoy visits the region, Israel has got the Lebanese used to holding the talks with that envoy over a very high flame, against a background of bombs and explosions, and while attacks on the defenseless and innocent citizens in the South and western al-Biqa' take place. He noted that the attacks have a very clear objective which is to put pressure on Lebanon and apply the greatest amount of pressure so that Lebanon will capitulate and give in to Israel's desires.

In a radio interview, Minister Dallul rejected Lebanon's participation in the multilateral talks. He pointed out that the Lebanese and Syrian courses are one course with one fate. He said the two courses are linked in everything, particularly with respect to the negotiations. Answering a question, the national defense minister expected that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher will bear new proposals creating a new atmosphere in the region.

Dallul on Resistance, Negotiations, Christopher

NC1908184294 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 19 Aug 94

[Text] Minister of National Defense Muhsin Dallul has stated that the recent pressures on south Lebanon are designed to isolate and exert pressure on Lebanon to make it pursue the same course as the Palestinians and Jordanians.

Dallul announced that the Lebanese Government backs the Resistance, has always done so, and is willing to publicly proclaim this fact. He noted that when the occupation ends, however, the government will not permit the Resistance to continue to operate in the south or on any other Lebanese territory and that only the legal authorities will carry weapons.

He added: We cannot halt the Resistance now, nor is it admissible for us to do so. The Lebanese find it unacceptable to do so at this time.

The defense minister asserted that there is no Lebanese organization called Ansarallah and that the whole thing is a fabricated and suspect issue, involving accusations against Lebanon with the aim of besieging it, distorting its image abroad, and blocking any aid to it.

In an interview with the Voice of the People radio, Dallul said that Israel wants to isolate Lebanon and impose its will and hegemony on it and compel it to sign an agreement of submission. He added that the others, notably the United States, have disregarded the Lebanese role in order to encourage a sentiment inside Lebanon and abroad calling for separating the Lebanese and the Syrian negotiating tracks.

Minister Dallul continued: We declared from the start that our people have the right to resist, that we have the right to have a resistance movement. As long as Israel occupies part of our territory and places some of our people in detention, we have the right to reject this terrorist method with all the means available to us, through civil and military steadfastness and by military and moral confrontation. When the occupation ends, however, there will be no resistance in the south or anywhere else in Lebanon. Only the legal authorities, the security agencies, the Army, and the Internal Security Forces will carry weapons.

He was told that the president disclosed an Israeli proposal to halt resistance operations in return for implementing UN Security Council Resolution 425 and asked to comment.

Dallul replied: There is something called the logical handling of national issues. The prevailing national logic is: How do we stop the resistance before the occupation ends?

Minister Dallul added: If we halt resistance operations, it will be said that nothing needs to be done because the area is secure.

He was told that after the Buenos Aires and London bombings, a Lebanese party was accused of involvement in these operations and reminded that a Paraguayan court implicated six Lebanese nationals in this issue. Asked if all this is part of the pressure against Lebanon, Minister Dallul answered: It is no coincidence that as soon as the Argentine incident occurred, Lebanon was accused of involvement even before the rubble was cleared. A nonexistent Lebanese organization was accused. This means that they just want to lay the blame at Lebanon's door. After the London bombings, Lebanon was also accused. This hasty accusation of Lebanon is intentional. They want to cause divisions inside Lebanon. They are targeting a certain stream in Lebanon and want to make it clash with other tendencies in the country and with the Lebanese authorities. We have no organization called Ansarallah.

Asked if some parties in the country oppose the Army's measures, Dallul replied: We have received no complaints. The Lebanese Army is authorized by the political leadership to assist the security forces, to establish public order, and give other forms of assistance. The Army does not do anything on its own initiative. It implements the political authorities' decisions. We have received no complaints about the Army's measures.

Asked to comment on a proposal frequently made by Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad to the United States involving the establishment of a joint Lebanese-Syrian negotiating delegation, he said: I have no accurate information on this issue. I do not, however, find this

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proposal strange. We spoke about it in the past. We proposed forming a collective Arab negotiating delegation but the Palestinians and the Jordanians acted alone. Only we and Syria remained. We will either continue the negotiations together or stop negotiating together. I do not find it strange that President al-Asad should propose a joint Lebanese-Syrian negotiating delegation under the chairmanship of a Lebanese official.

Asked what Lebanon's position is on the above issue, he said: Of course we support this proposal. We are willing to go ahead with such a plan because it shows President al-Asad has great confidence in the Lebanese negotiating stance and fully backs Lebanon. We are proud of this confidence.

In connection with the U.S. secretary of state's next regional tour, Dallul was asked if Lebanon and al-Yarzah [Lebanese Defense Ministry] are waiting for his arrival and if Lebanon has anything to tell Christopher, Dallul said: We have relayed to him all that we had to say. We know why he has not come to Lebanon. It is part of the pressure on Lebanon and an attempt to distort our irreproachable relationship with Syria. We are not really waiting for his visit. If he comes, he is welcome. If he does not come, he is still welcome. We have no problem with this issue. We are not in a hurry. We are in a strong position. It is others who are troubled, not we.

Fadlallah Links Israeli Withdrawal, End to Attacks

NC2308172394 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] 'Allamah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah affirmed today that the Resistance will not discard its weapons until the last Israeli soldier leaves southern Lebanon. In an interview with REUTER, he said that attacks on Israel will stop as soon as the withdrawal is completed. Resistance activities will then take on new forms and will use different arenas. Fadlallah expects the negotiations between Israel and Syria to take a long time before a settlement is reached, because there are thousands of details on which they must first agree.

Junblatt Says Land Bought To House Palestinians

NC2308201794 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1900 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Excerpt] At 1945 today, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri received in his house in Quraytim Refugee Affairs Minister Walid Junblatt and his political adviser Ghazi al-'Aridi. After the meeting, which lasted for one hour, Minister Junblatt said:

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] Can we know, Mr. Minister, what subjects you discussed in this lengthy meeting?

[Junblatt] Many things. What do you want to know? There are now many subjects on Lebanon's stage.

[Correspondent] The most important thing we want to know, Mr. Minister, is the story of the piece of land [words indistinct] on which houses will be built for the Palestinians. Did you discuss this subject, and have you really bought the land?

[Junblatt] I would like to repeat: Are the brothers there, the political and religious quarters, ready for the return of the Palestinians to Tall al-Za'tar, al-Dubayyah, Jisr al-Basha, or al-Nabatiyah? If they are, we will return the brothers to those places tomorrow. If they are not, then there is no need for this racist campaign, which reminds us of the days of 1974 and 1975. This racist campaign is being launched by known circles—the Phalangist Party and others—against the Palestinian people who were received by the Lebanese—specifically by President Bisharah al-Khuri—in 1948. These people are not new arrivals. They have been with us.

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister, have you, or have you not, bought the land?

[Junblatt] The arrangement was made, and the land was bought.

[Correspondent] When will the next step be made, Mr. Minister?

[Junblatt] This concerns the state's policy in cooperation with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency [UNRWA]. Tomorrow, the UNRWA director [in Lebanon] is visiting me. We will see how we will cooperate with him to build suitable houses for the Palestinian people. This is not a shameful act, but a political and ethical duty on the part of the Lebanese state pending their repatriation to Palestine. If [Phalangist Party secretary general] Paqraduni would like to repatriate them tomorrow, let him. They [not further identified] are also his friends. [passage omitted] [end recording]

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Information Minister on Elections, Peace, 'Carlos'

JN2308210794 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 2000 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Report by Thana' al-Imam in Damascus]

[Text] On the occasion of opening polling centers tomorrow morning for the People's Assembly elections, Syrian Information Dr. Muhammad Salman has said that the instructions that have been received from the highest level in Syria are firm and strictly ban any defection, small or large, regarding the polling process. Dr. Salman said that the People's Assembly's role is one of control and has the right to propose laws, but it it does not draw the foreign policy, which is drawn by the president and implemented by the foreign minister. Dr. Salman added that there are no political conflicts in Syria.

On the peace process, the information minister stressed that there have been no developments. He said that the UN Security Council resolutions demand an end to the occupation of others' territory by force, but do not demand any normalization, opening of embassies or tourist offices, and other such things. Dr. Salman said: We want a peace that can preserve the Syrian and Lebanese territories and Arab dignity. We are not currently being subjected to any foreign pressure, because we support the implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions. This is something on which the United States and Europe agree with us. He added: Some Arab parties had claimed there was great progress between Syria and Israel. Afterward, they themselves reached separate agreements with Israel. Meanhile, we remained faithful to our stand.

The Syrian minister said that matters concerning the Syrian-Israeli track are being discussed, such as security arrangements, but no agreement has been reached. He said Syria is demanding equal security arrangements from both parties, and will not agree to anything else.

Concerning Carlos, who is a topical issue, the Syrian information minister said that involving Syria's name in this issue is only meant to blemish its reputation.

Dr. Muhammad Salman said: We in Syria know nothing about him or where he used to be. Nobody has asked us about him, and nobody asked us to extradite him. The Syrian minister scoffed at those who say that Syria extradited Carlos as a gift for the United States to remove its name from the list of states supporting terrorism.

Country Rejects Implication in 'Carlos' Affair

MM2408102894 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Aug 94 p3

[Text] Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Syria has recently warned against attempts to implicate it in the French authorities' interrogation of the international terrorist Carlos with the aim of undermining Syria's reputation in the international community and finding a new justification for keeping its name on the U.S. State Department's list of terrorist states.

Informed sources say that Syria has initiated urgent contacts with a number of Arab and European states and with the United States rejecting and condemning the claims that it was responsible for some of the acts of terrorism committed by Carlos, and also declaring its innocence of these charges, reaffirming Syria's rejection of all forms of terrorism and extremism, and rejecting political pressures in the peace negotiations with Israel.

The sources add that Syria is holding contacts with Paris in this connection in the interest of preserving Syria's international relations.

'Senior Official' Cited on U.S. Role in Peace Talks

JN2208184494 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 21 Aug 94 p 3

[Excerpts] Despite all that is being said about the achievement of progress on the Syrian-Israeli track, what has happened amounts to no more than U.S. attempts to bring the two sides' viewpoints closer together and find common denominators between the two sides to work as a basis for further common denominators within the framework of achieving a peaceful solution. This is particularly true as long as the Americans are convinced that a lasting peaceful solution cannot be achieved without the other tracks [the Syrian and Lebanese tracks], particularly the Syrian track. [passage omitted]

A ranking Syrian official told AL-HAYAH that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and the U.S. Administration are focusing their efforts at the current stage of negotiations on "finding various formulas to find common denominators between Israel and Syria which will never relinquish its constants and right to its territory."

The senior official added that the Americans do not want to ignore the Syrian track, because there will be no comprehensive solution without Syria, and Damascus will not participate in any step that is not based of the bases of the peace process.

The official stressed that his country does not discuss the issues which will follow the achievement of peace before solving the major issue; namely, the full withdrawal from the Golan.

The official explained: "Based on this, Washington is trying to find points of agreement that will act as a springboard to reaching more points of agreement" between Syria and Israel. It seems that through their efforts to "break the stalemate" between the two sides, the Americans were able to persuade the Israelis to give them "signs" of their readiness to fully withdraw from the Golan Heights. [passage omitted]

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Effort To Amend Palestinian Charter Criticized

JN2208093594 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0456 GMT 22 Aug 94

[From the press review]

[Text] In its editorial, the newspaper TISHRIN says: No doubt, Israel's call to quickly convene a session of the Palestine National Council [PNC] as well as its great welcome of such a session, stem from the fact that Israel wants to entrench the Gaza-Jericho agreement one year after it was signed.

By entrenching this agreement, Israel wants to consolidate its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This time, Israel seeks a recognition of it by the Palestinian legislative branch after it gained the PLO leadership's recognition of its existence and entity.

In this regard, TISHRIN points to the announcement by Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres after he met with 'Arafat in Gaza. Peres said Israel is ready to permit all PNC members to visit Gaza in order to amend the articles of the Palestinian charter and to cancel the articles that call for establishing a democratic Palestinian state and removing Israel.

TISHRIN adds: Peres said he briefed 'Arafat on this readiness. 'Arafat thanked Peres for approving the call for the PNC to meet in order to amend the charter and to cancel all articles that do not conform to the self-rule plan. In other words, this means cancellation of the entire charter because there is a large gap between regaining the territories, securing the rights—including the right to self-determination—establishing an independent national state, and securing the right to repatriation on the one hand and maintaining Israeli occupation, separating the territories from their residents, liquidating the Palestine question, and violating the Palestinian people's rights on the other, as is being carried out by the 'Arafat leadership, the self-rule authority, and the Israeli occupation forces in accordance with the Gaza-Jericho agreement.

Paper: Hamas Not Only Opponent of Self-Rule

JN2108064294 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0445 GMT 21 Aug 94

[From the press review]

[Text] TISHRIN says that the 'Arafat leadership is under Israeli pressure to wage a real war against Palestinian strugglers rejecting self-rule. The paper says there are almost daily demands by Rabin or Peres on 'Arafat calling for tangible acts and combating Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement].

TISHRIN says Hamas is not the only opposition force. Rather, there are other resistance factions and large sectors of the Palestinian people who see nothing positive in the Oslo and Cairo agreements. They feel the PLO leadership has relinquished inalienable Palestinian rights and the UN Security Council resolutions, ignoring the sacrifices of tens of thousands of strugglers in return for an illusionary authority that lacks any reality.

TISHRIN adds: In fact, Israel has not ended its occupation of Palestinian territory. Rather, it has made it official via two signed agreements that ignore more than 1 million refugees. What is more serious is that Israel is planning for inter-Palestinian fighting between the self-rule authority and all factions of the intifadah. Israel views this infighting as the most effective way to end the intifadah, foster Palestinian bloodshed, and liquidate all Palestinian rights, aspirations, and hopes.

TISHRIN says that, more than anything else, this plot indicates Israel is tampering with international peace efforts and tirelessly working to undermine the U.S. initiative and to replace the UN Security Council resolutions with separate agreements that do not bring the region any closer to peace. Rather, such agreements provide the groundwork for more dangerous and violent conflicts. The paper notes: Hence, the gravity of the PLO's violation of the constants of a just solution and gambling with the UN Security Council resolutions, something that only increases Syria's adherence to the bases of the peace process in accordance with what has been agreed upon. This increases Syria's insistence that the resolutions of international legitimacy be fully implemented, something that requires complete withdrawal from the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon to the 4 June 1967 border.

Concluding its editorial, TISHRIN stresses that having agreed to trade peace for land, Syria is not ready to trade peace for illusions, separate deals, and incomplete solutions. To show seriousness about the peace process, Israel should fully withdraw its troops, dismantle its settlements, and evacuate its settlers. This is the yardstick of seriousness. There is no other yardstick at all.

Special Forces Commander in Lebanon Said Arrested

JN2408134094 Amman AL-BILAD in Arabic 24 Aug 94 p 1

[Text] Informed diplomatic sources said that the Syrian leadership has detained 'Ali Haydar, commander of the Special Forces in al-Biqa' Valley. The sources said Haydar was arrested for involvement in drug and smuggling issues.

According to information AL-BILAD has received from highly-placed political sources, 'Ali Haydar was arrested because of his opposition to the progress made on the Syrian-Israeli track.

AL-BILAD sources noted that the Syrian leadership is planning to adopt similar measures against other officers who expressed dissatisfaction with the progress in the peace process.

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Minister on Preparations for Parliamentary Elections

JN2008152794 Damascus AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 4 Aug 94 p 3

[Excerpts] Damascus (SANA)—Interior Minister Dr. Muhammad Harbah yesterday held a meeting with the governors, police commissioners, Ba'th Party secretaries, and civil register secretaries from the various governorates during which he briefed them on the arrangements that have been made by the ministry in preparation for the People's Assembly elections. The meeting was attended by the assistant ministers of interior and the members of the Central Committee supervising the elections.

Minister Harbah began the meeting by saying: The elections for the sixth term of the People's Assembly are of special importance since they will express the democratic atmosphere, national unity, and political stability our people are enjoying under the historic and brave leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad, the builder of modern Syria.

The minister also spoke about the importance of this meeting in explaining the arrangements, preparations, and measures that have been taken by the Interior Ministry in order to create the right electoral atmosphere for both candidates and voters as well as for the smooth running of the election process in the governorates.

Dr. Harbah underlined the governors' important role in ensuring the right democratic electoral atmosphere by following up on the mechanism of the electoral process, tackling any difficulties that might come up in order to enable the citizens to exercise their voting rights in the best manner possible, and showing concern for the interest of the citizen and the homeland.

Dr. Harbah emphasized the candidates' freedom to exercise their right to conduct their electoral campaigning and activity on the basis of commitment to and awareness and concern for the issues of the homeland and the citizen and serving the process of construction and development which has been witnessed by Syria under the leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad.

Later, the conferees reviewed and discussed the Interior Ministry's guidelines, which affirm that the personal identity card will be the only document the citizen will produce when exercising his right to vote. [passage omitted]

The interior minister then replied to the questions of the governors, Ba'th Party secretaries, and civil register secretaries on the means of facilitating the election process.

Later, the minister and his two assistants met with the police commissioners at the Interior Ministry and briefed them on the security guidelines during the electoral process.

The minister emphasized the need to guard ballot boxes after 2000 hours on the first day of the elections [24 August] and to maintain an adequate night watch until the following morning when voting will be resumed.

The minister reaffirmed the need to issue new identity cards to whoever needs them within the next three days. [passage omitted]

Election Campaigns for 7,266 Candidates Under Way

JN2008151594 Damascus AL-BA'TH in Arabic 9 Aug p 1

[Text] Amid the atmosphere of freedom and democracy, whose pillars were set by the glorious Corrective Movement, candidates for the People's Assembly have begun their election campaigns in the governorates in an effort to win the confidence of voters, who will choose only those who are most competent and capable of assuming the trust of representation.

Posters have appeared in all the towns and villages carrying slogans indicating the candidates' electoral programs, and meetings are being held everywhere in preparation for 24 August—national election day—when voters will confirm their commitment to the course of the Corrective Movement.

In a statement to the Syrian Arab News Agency, Interior Minister Dr. Muhammad Harbah said: Following the release of the lists of all 7,266 candidates from all constituencies whose applications to run in the elections for the sixth legislative term of the People's Assembly were approved and the names were published in the local papers on 7 August 1994, these candidates can now exercise their right to conduct their electoral campaigns by using all means of publicity: hanging posters, sticking up personal photos, issuing electoral statements in their constituencies, publishing announcements in the papers, or stretching banners in public thoroughfares in order to introduce themselves and their electoral programs to the voters.

In the meantime, preparations continue in all governorates to create a democratic atmosphere for 24 August—election day—which will be a national festival when voters will confirm their belief in the glorious Corrective Movement.

Paper Reports on Latakia Port Operations

JN2008155194 Damascus AL-BA'TH in Arabic 5 Aug 94 p 6

[Article by Muhammad al-Daghan and Halah Shaykh Ibrahim]

[Excerpts] Just as curiosity drives Latakia visitors to the port area to see this landmark, the same can also be said about our story with Latakia Port. We have had a long desire to see the port and establish contact with it, but our attempts have not been successful. But when people began talking frequently about the port's shortcomings,

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we decided to undertake a press inquiry and get the full picture. There was nothing to prevent us from an in-depth report on the port.

However, out of our concern for this public utility and its vital role, we decided to spread our work over a whole month in order to get down to the nitty gritty and present a realistic picture of the port. So, what did we find?

A booklet on the port with figures and pictures says Latakia Port enjoys a great strategic location along the international sea routes, making it ideal for maritime transport. It has the great advantage of serving as an Arab and international entry point linking three continents: Asia, Africa, and Europe. It is also quick in servicing ships, handling goods—imports, exports, loading and unloading ships, and so forth—and moving passengers.

We add to this information by saying that the port has 2,552 workers and its breakwater is about 3 km long. The port's dry dock area covers 130 hectares, its sea basin is 135 hectares and its wharf is more than 4 km. In some areas, the harbor is 13.30 meters deep. The storage area is about 1.4 million square meters, of which 120,000 cubic meters are covered. It has a 15-kilometer long railroad network which was built a few months ago. In 1993, the port's profits amounted to 662 million Syrian pounds. The port has a dollar bank account amounting to about $3 million. In short, the port is huge to judge by its capabilities and resources. And, if its work mechanism is properly developed, its revenue will increase. Perhaps, the biggest problems facing the port is its equipment.

Speaking on this subject Professor Jabra Yazbik, director of ports's Mechanical Department, said: Our equipment is old, especially the "Close" [name as transliterated] cranes, whose mediocre lifting capacity does not match the advancement in the freight system. These cranes are not used often because of their old age and mediocre capacities and technical specifications. Moreover, they lack spare parts, since the firm that manufactured them has long since stopped production.

In addition, we have electric berth cranes dating back to 1956 and 1957. They are still operational, but their technical condition is bad due to old age. They were manufactured by a German firm, which has also stopped producing such models. The difficulty in getting spare parts has prompted the port authorities to request the replacement of all old equipment. The port also suffers from acute shortage of special equipment for lifting containers.

Engineer Mahdi al-Khayr, also from the Mechanical Department, said: Despite their technical problems, the port's equipment unloaded 120,000 containers and about 3 million tonnes of different types of goods. The work continues, but there are constraints sometimes.

Commenting on the equipment, Eng. al-Khayr said: We have 30 "Poplan" [name as transliterated] cranes with a lifting capacity of 12 tonnes each. Of these, 24 are operational and 6 are out of order. We also have Seven "BH" cranes, of which three are out of order. We are trying to obtain spare parts for one of them. We also have two "Demarch" [name as transliterated] cranes with a lifting capacity of 27 tonnes, of which one is out of order.

Eng. al-Khayr continued: The problem here is that the equipment is very old, such as "Kolz" [name as transliterated] cranes, which were manufactured in 1967 and 1974. We have 27 of these, of which only 4 are operational and 23 have been out of order since 1981. Even if repaired, these cranes are not economically viable, since they cannot withstand the strain of working nonstop for 12 hours. Their repair cost is also very high. Eng. al-Khayr said: Regarding folk lifts, 10 are operational and 20 are out of order.

Replying to a question on the repair of this equipment, Eng. al-Khayr said: A Japanese company has asked $6,000 for the spare parts of each equipment, while the price of a new one ranges from $15,000 to $20,000. Therefore, we will try to revive only those machines that cost less to repair. We have two barges for transporting goods from ships to the dock. These crane barges are 100 tonnes each. Very often one of them is out of order. So when this happens, work is disrupted.

Thus, the subject of equipment has remained a point of discussion for years without anyone finding a solution to the tonnes of useless equipment which still lies at Latakia Port area threatened with rust.

'Abdallah Adham, a spokesman for the Maritime Transport Establishment, said: Our difficulties can be summed up in the fact that the public sector does not ship through the establishment, contrary to its foundation law and the frequent guidelines issued by the cabinet over the years. Currently, the establishment does not process more than 15 percent of public sector's shipment orders. [passage omitted]

Speaking about the movement of goods, Adham said: In 1993, the port's movement of imports, exports, and containers was as follows:

Imports: 2,444,839 tonnes.
Exports: 430,496 tonnes.
Total: 2,875,335 tonnes.
Incoming containers: 61,435.
Outgoing containers: 59,060. [passage omitted]

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Bangladesh

'At Least' 100 Ershad Supporters Injured by Police

BK2308164494 Hong Kong AFP in English 1511 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] Dhaka, Aug 23 (AFP)—At least 100 people were injured when supporters of Bangladesh's ex-president, Hussain Muhammad Ershad battled armed police Tuesday [23 August], who fired rubber bullets and tear gas, witnesses said.

At least 1,000 leaders and activists of the opposition Jatiya Party (JP) fought with police by setting off powerful home-made bombs and throwing stones around Panthapath Road in central Dhaka, they said. Witnesses said at least 100 people were injured, including several policemen, and added that unidentified figures also fired at security personnel.

Police at the scene said they were forced to take action as authorities had not given the JP permission to hold the rally.

The United News of Bangladesh (UNB) news agency, quoting JP sources, said they had permission to hold the rally, but hundreds of police blocked the road leading to the venue. The nearly four-hour long clashes started when JP women activists tried to break the police cordon.

Staff at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital said they treated several people injured by rubber bullets and stones.

The JP supporters, demanding Ershad's release from jail, also damaged a large number of vehicles and two passing trains. The party, along with other opposition groups, has been boycotting parliament since March to call for early elections under a non-partisan interim government.

Bangladeshi Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's government has rejected the demand as unconstitutional. Kazi Zafar Ahmed, ex-prime minister and a JP lawmaker, drove around the area in an open jeep denouncing the police action and called for a half-day general strike on Wednesday. "This is the worst form of autocracy," JP lawmaker Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury was quoted as saying by UNB. "This violation of democratic, constitutional and human rights."

Last week, Ershad said it was only a matter of time before he would be released from the high-security Dhaka Central Jail because of the current political situation.

Ershad, a member of parliament and former army general, seized power in a bloodless military coup in 1982 and stepped down eight years later in the face of a mass pro-democracy uprising. He was later jailed on charges of possession of illegal weapons and graft. Ershad has appealed to be released on bail in the weapons case after serving three years of a 10-year sentence.

India

'Imminent' War With Pakistan Ruled Out

BK2408091594 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 24 Aug 94

[Text] New Delhi has made it clear that it does not possess any nuclear weapons. The clarification was made by the minister of state for external affairs in the Rajya Sabha today. He also ruled out the possibility of any imminent conventional or nuclear war between India and Pakistan. In a written reply, Mr. Khursheed said that India does not share the view expressed by the U.S. assistant secretary for political and military affairs in this regard recently. The minister said such statements have also been made earlier by U.S. officials and India has made its position known to that country.

In the Lok Sabha, the entire opposition today demanded a statement from the government on its strategy to counter the nuclear threat from Pakistan. They said the confirmation of former Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif that Islamabad has nuclear bomb creates an alarming situation and the House should take up a discussion on the issue. The parliamentary affairs minister, Mr. V.C. Shukla, assured the members that the government will take the House into confidence over national security. Mr. Chandrajit Yadav, Janata Dal-G, raising the issue during zero hour said Mr. Nawaz Sharif's comment that the atomic bomb can be used against India in the event of a war is particularly alarming. Mr. Yadav said the prime minister should convene a meeting of all party leaders to take them into confidence on security matters. The leader of the opposition, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, and the leaders of Janata Dal, CPI [Communist Party of India], CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist], and AIADMK [All India Dravida Munnetra Kazagham] lashed out at Pakistan's anti-India policies. The members asked the government to step up its efforts to get Islamabad declared a state sponsor of terrorism. The former prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, expressed the view that Mr. Nawaz Sharif's statement is a part of the comeback trail of the Pakistani leader. He reposed full confidence in the ability of the security forces to meet any threat on the borders. Congress-I members Mr. Ramesh Chunitala and P.C. Chakko said there is need for an in-depth discussion on the security precaution.

Outcome of Regional Environmental Meeting Viewed

BK2408061894 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 24 Aug 94

[Commentary by G.C. Bhaskaran]

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[Text] The two-day consultations among the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation], ASEAN, and other regional countries have expressed the collective will of the people of the region and humanity at large to preserve what is left of much-ravaged nature for posterity. A declaration adopted at the Bangalore meeting, which concluded yesterday, recognized that economic and social development and poverty removal are the first and overriding priorities of developing countries. It also stressed the intrinsic worth and right to existence and the evolutionary development of each species irrespective of its value to humans. This is in conformity with the Indian ethos of Vasudhaiva Kutumbhakam [the world is like a family], where all beings are treated as creations of God and thus respected.

An important highlight of the declaration is its willingness to explore the possibility of the setting up of an Asian regional fund for conservation and sustainable use of the components of biological diversity. The Bangalore Declaration calls upon national governments to frame common guidelines on intellectual property rights related to genetic materials and biotechnology. It stressed the need for a policy related to the rights of farmers and indigenous and local communities.

The Bangalore meeting—organized by the Ministry of Environment and Forests and the United Nations Environment Program—was attended by representatives of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar [Burma], the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam and experts from international organizations. This is a follow-on of the United Nations Earth Summit at Rio de Janeiro held in June in 1992.

It is interesting to note that seven of the world's top 25 biologically richer countries are in Asia. A regional meeting at Bangalore is thus a step in the right direction for a common approach to strike a mean between the ever-increasing needs of technological advancement and the rapid depletion of the earth's resources. The (?consent) paper on the Bangalore consultations put the dilemma briefly by saying that the present should not be allowed to be an enemy of the future. The task of reconciliation cannot be discharged by any single country. Regional cooperation and global responsibilities need to be formulated and given an institutional mechanism.

Iran

Turkmen President Discusses Gas Transfer Project

Agreement Reached

LD2308174694 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] The presidents of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkmenistan have reached a final agreement on joint implementation of the project to transfer gas to Europe. In the first round of talks, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani referred to the project of transferring Turkmenistan's gas to Turkey and Europe via Iran as an international project, describing it as very significant for maintaining and strengthening regional and world solidarity and security.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani described the grounds for cooperation between Iran and Turkmenistan as well as other Central Asian countries of the Caspian Sea, especially in the field of energy exchange, as very suitable, and he reiterated: With the increase in the activities of the Bandar-e Torkaman port, Iran's capacity to export gas and other commercial goods and Iran's volume of trade with neighboring countries will increase.

The president described road-building projects, cement production, the construction of refineries, and the exchange of medicines as new grounds for cooperation between Iran and Turkmenistan. He stressed the need to rapidly implement agreements previously reached between the two countries.

Saparmurad Niyazov praised Iran's efforts regarding the formation of the conference on the transfer of Turkmenistan's gas in the presence of observers from Russia, Turkey, and Kazakhstan, describing it as an indication of the seriousness of Iran's officials and Iran's will in implementing grand and international projects.

The Turkmen president said: Iran, Turkmenistan, and Turkey will not be the only three countries to benefit from the implementation of this project. The support and backing of all the countries of the region and the world for this project is indicative of the value and importance of this project for the entire world's economy.

Mr. Niyazov described the growing trend in cooperation between Iran and Turkmenistan in the economic and trade fields, especially during the recent years, as very positive. The Turkmen president also invited Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani to take part in the independence ceremonies of that country. This was accepted by the president.

Petroleum Minister Comments

LD2308183494 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Text] The interstate council for the construction of the gas pipeline to transfer Turkmenistan's gas, meeting in Tehran, has accepted Iran's proposals for the routing and specifications of this pipeline. The agreement on this project is to be signed by the two sides, Iran and Turkmenistan, this evening. Petroleum Minister Gholam Reza Aqazadeh spoke to our correspondent about the specifications of this project. He said:

[Begin Aqazadeh recording] This project is estimated to cost around $3.5 billion. It is one of the largest projects in the world. It will be carried out by a number of

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contractors and the National Iranian Oil Company. In this agreement, we have agreed to finance [previous word in English] 50 percent of the cost via our own internal banking system. Of course, this financing will be in the form of rials to a certain extent, since most of the work in building this pipeline can be carried out internally.

Of the pipeline's length, 1,450 km will pass through the territory of the Islamic Republic of Iran. However, the total length of the pipeline is estimated to be around 4,000 km. [end recording]

According to Mr. Aqazadeh, the capacity of this pipeline in its first phase will be 15 billion cubic meters; it will increase to 28 billion cubic meters in its second phase. He said it would take six to eight years to complete the project and added that after 25 years of use, the pipeline would be put under Iran's control.

Agreement Signed

LD2308212094 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1930 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Excerpt] The final agreement on the project to transfer Turkmenistan's gas via Iran and Turkey to Europe was signed by 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani and Saparmurad Niyazov, the presidents of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Turkmenistan, after the discussions between the two countries' experts and in the presence of representatives from Turkey, Russia, and Kazakhstan. [passage omitted]

Niyazov: Ties 'Deeply Rooted'

LD2408084294 Tehran IRNA in English 0802 GMT 24 Aug 94

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 24, IRNA—Turkmen President Saparmurad here Wednesday paid tribute to the founder of the Islamic Republic, the late Imam Khomeyni, by laying a wreath of flowers on his tomb.

Niyazov, who is heading a high-ranking political-economic delegation here, also met with imam's son Hojjat ol-Eslam Ahmad Khomeyni later.

During the meeting President Niyazov termed relations between the two countries as "deeply rooted". He said that during the rule of Marxism the Turkmen people could not freely observe their religious rituals whereas today, being inspired by the late imam's teachings, they felt free.

In reply Hojjat ol-Eslam Ahmad Khomeyni underlined promotion of economic and cultural relations between the two nations and hoped that the visit would open a new chapter in the regional cooperation.

At the end of the meeting the Turkmen president signed the memorial book of the mausoleum of Imam Khomeyni.

Niyazov arrived here Tuesday for a two-day official visit and was greeted at the airport by his Iranian counterpart Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

Ends Visit, Departs

LD2408103694 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 24 Aug 94

[Text] After participating in ceremonies to break the ground for construction of a pipeline to transfer Turkmenistan's natural gas to Europe via Iran, Turkmen President Saparmurad Niyazov left Tehran this morning, seen off officially by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

Before leaving Tehran, Mr. Niyazov said: Today a historical event has happened for the people of Turkmenistan, Iran, and the other nations of the region, and we believe it is great triumph that work has now started on construction of the Turkmen gas pipeline.

Niyazov added: Like the president of Islamic Iran, I also believe that this great international project is highly conducive to bringing about solidarity and unity among nations and safeguarding regional security and stability.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, in turn, referred to the importance and the special features of the pipeline to transfer Turkmenistan's gas. He said: Implementation of this important international project is a great stride towards the expansion of cooperation between the Central Asian states and Iran.

The president then referred to Turkmenistan's potential to export 80 billion cubic meters of gas per year and said the pipeline had a very important role in transferring Turkmenistan's gas to the world's markets and establishing a link with east Asia. He added: Today a new chapter has unfolded in the Iranian history, and in this way the huge resources around the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf can have access to markets in Iran and across the globe.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani said the cost of constructing the pipeline in Iran would exceed 3.5 billion dollars. He added: Even without taking economic dimensions into consideration, the implementation of this project enjoys great importance for the regional countries as far as social and security considerations are concerned. He also said: Fortunately, Iran has all the means for implementing similar large-scale regional and international projects, and to construct this pipeline, we produce spiral pipes measuring 2 to 3 meters in diameter. We have in Iran the technology and raw material to produce this pipeline.

The president of our country expressed the hope that with the resolve and steadfastness of officials from both countries, the efforts made by Mr. Niyazov may bear fruit.

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Agreement Viewed

NC2408071494 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 24 Aug 94

[Text] The final agreement on the transfer of Turkmenistan's gas to Europe via Iran and Turkey was signed by the presidents of Iran and Turkmenistan in Tehran last night.

The Central News Unit reports that during the signing in the presence of representatives from Russia, Turkey, and Kazakhstan, Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that the implementation of the project benefits the peoples of the two countries and is a blessing for the entire region and the world.

Our president thanked the members of the second intergovernmental session for their serious efforts in helping the project reach fruition and stated: I hope that just as Russia, Turkey, and Kazakhstan supported this project they will continue their serious support throughout its implementation.

Turkmen President Saparmurad Niyazov then spoke briefly and expressed thanks for the order and coordination that ruled during the Tehran talks and added: Although many countries considered Asia an unstable area of conflict, the sincere relations and the important political-economic cooperation among regional countries have proven to them that true peace and stability should be sought in this region.

In a report on the signing of the final agreement on the transfer of Turkmen gas to Europe via Iran, AP states: This agreement has defeated Washington's efforts to isolate Tehran. The report adds: The signing of the final agreement between Ashgabat and Tehran is considered a great success for the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Velayati Said To Offer Hizballah Assurances

MM2308155094 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Aug 94 p3

[Text] Tehran, London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Informed Iranian sources said yesterday that Iran's efforts to improve its relations with the West would not be at the expense of its allies in Lebanon, especially Hizballah.

The sources said that that assurance came from Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati during his meeting with Hizballah leaders at the Iranian Embassy in Damascus the day before yesterday.

According to the Iranian sources, the Hizballah leaders expressed concern about the possibility of Iran handing them over to Western governments for trial on terrorist charges.

Some press reports said last week that Iran, which helped in the extradition of Carlos to France, might hand over 'Imad Mughniyah to Germany.

According to Western sources, Mughniyah currently lives in Tehran. He is one of Hizballah's prominent leaders. It is believed that his extradition will figure in a deal that would lead to final normalization between Iran and the West.

A Tehran publication last week reported that a Hizballah fighter who was involved in the killing of Colonel Richard Higgins, the U.S. officer working with the UN forces operating in southern Lebanon, was himself killed recently in a car accident. Some sources say that the accident might have been planned to put an end to the pressure on Iran to extradite the man.

During his meeting with Hizballah leaders, Velayati reaffirmed Iran's position that all activities should be aimed against Israel. He criticized the recent clashes between Hizballah and Amal Movement.

According to Iranian sources, Velayati described the Iranian-Syrian alliance as "a strategic alliance not based on short-term calculations."

Iraq Urged To Extradite Suspected MKO Member

LD2408085394 Tehran IRNA in English 0752 GMT 24 Aug 94

[Text] United Nations, New York, Aug. 24, IRNA—Iran strongly blasted Iraqi regime's support for the terrorist Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization (MKO) and called for the extradition of the person responsible for the murder of three Iranian Christian pastors who has fled to Iraq.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry in a note verbale to the Iraqi Embassy in Tehran dated 20 July 1994 called for the extradition of Majid Esfandiari who is charged with bombing and also murdering Rev. Tatabous Mikaelian and Rev. Mehdi Dibaj as well as being an accomplice in the murder of Bishop Haik Hovspian-Mehr.

The note was handed over to U.N. Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali by Iran's permanent representative to the U.N. Kamal Kharrazi and circulated as a document of the U.N. Security Council Tuesday.

It said that after committing such terrorist acts and while carrying arms, Esfandiari and his companion injured Mohammad Yazdi, an Iranian citizen, and crossed the border in the Mehran area of Ilam Province and fled to Iraq.

"The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, once again, stongly protests the presence of the terrorist organization of Monafeqin (which calls itself the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran) in the territory of Iraq and considers the support provided by the Government of Iraq for that orgnization as blatant interference in the internal affairs of Iran and holds Iraq fully responsible for the criminal acts of this terrorist organization," it said.

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Turning to the arrest warrant issued by Iranian judicial authorities, it said that the Iranian Government calls upon Baghdad "to take urgent measures to arrest Mr. Majhid Esfandiari and extradite him to Iran on the basis of principles governing bilateral relations and respect for the national sovereignty of states, and in the light of the expressed commitment by the Government of Iraq to the same."

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran hopes that the Government of the Republic of Iraq would thus give practical effect to its belief in good-neighborly relations, lessening tension in bilateral relations and respect for the rules and principles of international law, the note read.

Shipping Company Ready for Regional Business

LD2008181294 Tehran IRNA in English 1704 GMT 20 Aug 94

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 20, IRNA—The Central Asian states of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan could transfer their goods to other parts of the world via Iran as per the contract concluded recently between Iran and Turkmenistan, it was announced here today.

Managing director of the Islamic Republic Shipping Company (IRSC), Mahmoud Tarjoman, also told reporters that Turkmenistan is to export about 500,000 tons of cotton to Italy and China via Iran's Bandar Abbas port soon.

Last calendar year (ended March 21), he said, IRSC handled 13.1 million tons of goods, of which 8 million tons were carried by Iranian vessels, showing an increase of two million tons from 1992.

According to Tarjoman the company not only saved the country dlrs. [dollars] 78 million but also earned dlrs. 32 million in hard currency by transporting goods for other countries.

The average rates of marine trips increased to 4.7 from 3.8 during the said period with the result that the need for chartering foreign vessels fell from 147 to 70, he said.

The company ferried some 240,000 passengers to and from Persian Gulf ports over the past year and a plan is underway according to which Pakistani nationals residing in Persian Gulf countries could avail the services of the Iranian shipping company for cheap visits to home via Iran, disclosed Tarjoman.

According to Tarjoman the IRSC fleet is to be replenished and in the next five years 41 new vessels are to replace the old ones.

China, for instance, is to build 10 multi-purpose ships for Iran at a cost of dlrs. 250 million, while Croatia, under a contract to be inked next month, would build four ships for Iran.

On setting up of the joint shipping company of the 10-member Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), Tarjoman said the proposed company will have its headquarters in Iran, and the nominal capital of dlrs 10 million is to be shared by all member states.

Except for the three founding members, Iran, Pakistan and Turkey, the other seven ECO states do not have access to international waters. Of the seven, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, are completely landlocked, while Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan have ports on the world's largest inland sea, the Caspian.

Iran's geographical location provides the shortest possible route for the said seven states to international waters.

Objectives of Damascus Tripartite Meeting Viewed

NC2408101294 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian 1730 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] On Sunday, 21 August 1994, the foreign ministers of Iran, Turkey, and Syria once again met in the Syrian capital, Damascus, on the pretext of assessing the situation in Iraq in general and the situation in Iraqi Kurdistan in particular. It should be noted that these three countries have met several times during the past few years to discuss this issue.

Iran, Turkey, and Syria met to discuss the Iraqi situation and to express their concern over the dismemberment of that country at a time when they are not prepared to allow either a representative of the Iraqi Government or representatives of the administration in Iraqi Kurdistan to attend such sessions.

Apparently the objective of the three foreign ministers' meeting is to study a common stance on the possible dismemberment of Iraq. Moreover, they are doing this at a time when no person or entity has suggested Iraq's dismemberment. The Governments of Iran, Turkey, and Syria have been shedding crocodile tears for Iraq's territorial integrity for three or four years now, even though there have been no particular proposals for Iraq's dismemberment. Meanwhile, both Iran and Turkey covet parts of Iraqi territory and sometimes reiterate claims to portions of Iraq's territory.

The truth is that what concerns and frightens the Governments of Iran, Turkey, and Syria is not the issue of Iraq's dismemberment, but the situation in Iraqi Kurdistan and the strengthening of the just struggles of the Kurdish people in other parts of Kurdistan. These governments do not realize that expanding democracy is behind the growing national sentiments and pan-Kurdish sentiments of the Kurds in these three countries. They think that it stems from the current situation in Iraq. Thus, the Kurdish problem in general and the

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current situation in Iraqi Kurdistan in particular is regarded as a significant, major, and common problem of the three countries.

Each of the three governments rule over part of Kurdistan; and Kurds in all parts of Kurdistan are struggling for their national rights. The fulfillment of the needs of the Kurdish people in any part of Kurdistan does not please the neighboring countries that have part of Kurdistan under their rule and domination. This is why the concern and fear of these three countries can be clearly seen behind the crocodile tears that they shed for the integrity of Iraqi territory.

The regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which has been crushing the people in Kordestan for expressing their wish for autonomy, cannot be satisfied and happy with the situation that has emerged for the Iraqi Kurds. This regime has constantly engineered and carried out various plots and machinations against Iraqi Kurdistan for four years now. For more than two years this regime has been uninterruptedly shelling the border areas of Iraqi Kurdistan with its heavy artillery. Qal'ah Dizzah and villages in [name indistinct] area are targets of the clerical regime's long-range guns. In this regard, the clerical regime criticizes the Turkish Government for allowing the United States and its allies to use bases in Turkey to support the Iraqi Kurds.

For a long time the Turkish Government denied the existence of several millions of Kurds in eastern Turkey. Even though it has now admitted—in one way or another, because of domestic problems on the one hand and pressures by Western countries on the other—the existence of Kurds in that country, it has not taken any positive steps to ensure the national and political rights of the Kurds in Turkey and continues to intensify its military and police pressures on the Kurdish movement in Turkey.

As for the Syrian Government, not only has it not recognized the rights of the Kurds in Syria but it is also trying to erase the Kurds' national identity and constantly pursues a chauvinistic policy toward the Kurds.

The longstanding hostility and opposition of Iran, Turkey, and Syria toward the Kurdish people in the various parts of Kurdistan leave no room for doubt that instead of being an opportunity for exchanging views on the general situation in Iraq, such sessions are only aimed at finding ways to oppose even more virulently the formation of an autonomous Kurdistan within Iraq and at studying ways to crush the Kurdish movement in the other parts of Kurdistan.

Although the current atmosphere and the world's sympathy for the Kurdish people have helped to somewhat lessen these three countries' ability to hatch a common plot against the Kurdish movement, it is only prudent for the Kurds in those countries be concerned and fearful of their agreements and covert plots. Undoubtedly any common step by these three countries to crush the Kurdish movement will draw a worldwide reaction from the friends of the Kurdish people.

Has the time not come for Iran, Turkey, and Syria to adopt a peaceful and just way to solve this problem instead of plotting against the justice-seeking movement of the Kurdish people?

President Inaugurates Islamic Unity Conference

LD2408111894 Tehran IRNA in English 1040 GMT 24 Aug 94

[Text] Tehran, Aug 24, IRNA—President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani here Wednesday said that the Islamic world is blessed with immense resources and potentials which could be exploited through unity of Muslims in the best possible way.

The president made the remark this morning at the opening session of the seventh International Islamic Unity Conference attended by over 300 scholars from 31 countries from across the world .

There is a need for an ideological and spiritial revolution in order to further consolidate unity among Muslims, the president stressed.

The Islamic world should admit that it could not survive with the existing, the president said and called on Muslims to maintain unity among themselves as a means to guarantee their progress. [sentence as received] He referred to the operations for the transfer of gas from Turkmenistan to Europe via Iran and Turkey as a practical example of Islamic unity and said that the giant project would lead to an expanded cooperation in the region which, he said, the global arrogance could not tolerate.

He called on the participant scholars to encourage their governments to cooperate with other Muslim countries and said that there were ample opportunities for cooperation among Muslim states.

President Rafsanjani described the contemporary era as the most appropriate juncture for Muslims to achieve unity and said that to this end people should not place hope in those statesmen and heads of states who are after the secular world.

In Afghanistan, Muslims by closing their ranks did put an end to the diabolic Soviet rule but now they were fighting with each other which did not sound rational, the president said.

Rafsanjani criticized the U.N. double-standard towards imposing sanctions against countries like Libya and Iraq and its indifference towards repeated violations of U.N. resolutions by the Zionist regime. With the adoption of a single resolution the world would embark on military expedition to Iraq but in case of Tel Aviv's indifference towards the resolution issued against it, the U.N. would pay no attention and would not even resort to force, said the president.

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"In the contemporary world the tools of power are in the hands of the world of arrogance and Muslims are being imprisoned in their own houses by the hegemonic powers," he stressed.

He noted that both unity and discord were two inseparable parts of human nature, adding that by following guidelines of the holy Koran the main solution for achieving unity would be found, adding that the holy Koran rejected resorting to force for the settlement of differences.

"We should find the way in which we could live together peacefully and employ forces for the progress of the human perfection," said the president.

He expressed hope that the conference which is being attended by prominent world scholars would find a practical way for the restoration of unity among Muslim ummah.

Oil Ministry Reports 'Optimum Economic Development'

LD2108103294 Tehran IRNA in English 0224 GMT 21 Aug 94

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 20, IRNA—The Oil Ministry and its subsidiary companies have enjoyed optimum economic development during the imposed war (1980-1988) and in the post-war era, says a report released by the Ministry.

In the light of statistics, Iran as part of its policy of shifting from an oil-based economy produced 3,600,000 barrels per day (BPD) of oil last calendar year 1372 (March 1993-March 1994), a far cry from the pre-revolution figure of 5,663,000 BPD.

Oil exports before the triumph of the revolution had been 4,847,000 BPD, while last year, Iran exported 2,486,000 BPD.

The refining capacity of the country has also significantly increased, and in 1372 it averaged 1,167,000 barrels BPD from the 747,000 BPD refined in 1356 (March 1977-March 1978).

However despite the reduced exports and the fall of oil prices, the process of development and reconstruction continued at a steady pace even when the western imposed war (1980-88) was raging on the country's frontiers.

At present all factories are operating on full stream and most of them even have raised production capacities, indicating a bright prospect for the second development plan.

According to figures production of petrol in 1977-1978 was 13.6 million liters a day and daily consumption 12.7 mn liters, whereas in 1993-1994, production kept pace with the growing needs totaling 25.1 mn liters a day with daily consumption standing at 29.4 mn liters.

The growth in production of oil derivatives has become possible through large-scale investments to set up new refineries.

Arak and Bandar Abbas refineries were built after the victory of the Islamic Revolution. The budget paid as subsidies for petroleum derivatives was spent on infrastructural projects.

On gas production, the figures showed that before the revolution tapped gas facilities were available to only 26,000 houses, 1,570 business units and 370 industrial units throughout the country, while 15 years later, subscribers number 1,909,726 houses (a 73-fold increase), 57,000 business units and 1,178 industial units.

According to the report, in 1978-1979 there were only 52,000 natural gas supply centers, whereas the present figure is 266,247 supply centers.

Daily gas consuption, it said, has increased from 9.6 million cubic meters to 79.2 cubic meters and that the number of towns and cities provided with tapped gas has increased to 243 from a mere five before the revolution.

The petrochemical companies, despite the sufferings of the war, today produce a 5,239,000 tons of products.

It is worth noting that the petrochemical complexes were built in Arak, Bandar Imam Khomeyni and Isfahan after the culmination of the Islamic Revolution in 1979.

A large part of Bandar Imam's petrochemical complex was put into operation in the first half of the current year.

Denial of Kordestan 'Problem' Criticized

NC2408103094 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian 1730 GMT 23 Aug 94

[Unattributed commentary: "Ignoring the Kurdish Movement Can Neither Destroy the Movement nor Solve the Kurdish Problem"]

[Text] The clerical regime, which recognizes no limits in hypocrisy and has turned lies and duplicity into its official policy, has always tried to distort the truth about Kordestan and about the Kurdish problem, trying to hide from the people that during 15 years of regime rule the Kurdish people in Iranian Kordestan have carried out a vital and persistent struggle against the clerical regime.

Continuing this same policy the regime has even refrained from publishing reports on clashes between the peshmerga and its suppressive forces in Kordestan in its mass media, trying to hide the truth from people abroad and the masses in Iran. This is why the president of the clerical regime told Turkish President Suleyman Demirel that the Iranian regime faces no Kurdish problem.

Inasmuch as the movement in Kordestan is so extensive and considerable that the regime's officials cannot hide it

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with their silence, we ask: If there is no problem in Kordestan and the Kurdish people are [word indistinct] of the regime, why has Kordestan been so heavily militarized? And why are there so many garrisons, bases, and forces? Why are so many military forces amassed on every height and road? If the regime feels no threat in this part of the country why are the regime's forces dispatched to this area and why do they cooperate with foreign countries against this area? Why is the regime plotting against the Kurdish people in other parts of Kurdistan if it is not afraid of the Kurdish people in Kordestan of Iran? And why is it so terrified about the current situation in Iraqi Kurdistan?

If Kordestan is a calm area without any problems for the regime and its suppressive forces, why has the regime always regarded the Kurds and Kordestan with hostility? Why is it that not a day passes without the people's farmland being shelled with its heavy guns? If the Democratic Party of Kordestan [DPK], as the leader of the Kurdish movement in Iranian Kordestan, does not enjoy the people's support and if the DPK's antidictatorial struggle is not very significant and not a source of fear for the regime, why is the regime's stance on this party so rabid and why are the party leaders assassinated? Why are the headquarters of the DPK combatants bombarded and shelled and why is no inhuman and illegal act spared in the effort to weaken this party and the movement of the Kurdish people?

If Kordestan is truly as calm and problem-free as Hashemi-Rafsanjani claims, why did Rahimi—the regime's lackey in Kordestan Province—on 30 December 1993, at the congregation mosque in Baneh, after numerous lies and empty promises, say that before attending to Kordestan's affairs and to its reconstruction there should first be security in this part of our country and normality?

When the Kurdish problem is propounded as a political issue, Hashemi-Rafsanjani and his regime claim they are facing no problems in Kordestan. When it comes to the people's expectations and attending to Kordestan's affairs, Kordestan is void of security. There can be no reconstruction or activity concerning its other affairs because of the absence of security. But is the Kordestan Rahimi describes not the same Kordestan that Hashemi-Rafsanjani describes as a calm area without problems?

Will those regime soldiers who were taken captive about two weeks ago during operations by DPK peshmerga in Urumiyeh and then released not ridicule Hashemi-Rafsanjani's remarks? Will the families of the soldiers who were killed during the current week in Mahabad in clashes with the peshmerga and who became victims of the regime's policies in Kordestan not ask who this force is being used against and on what suppressive mission these soldiers were killed?

Possibly the regime believes that the bigger the lie the better it can convince the people. But as far as the Kordestan problem is concerned, at least the people in our country and many abroad know of the Kurdish problem in Iranian Kordestan and consider the struggles by the Kurdish people in Iranian Kordestan as just. This is why Kordestan and the Kurdish people are well-known words for the freedomseekers and the oppressed.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani knows—better than anyone—that his allegations regarding Kordestan and the Kurdish people are baseless and that neither will the Kurdish problem be solved nor the movement in Kordestan weakened through denials and silence. The future and the process of the movement in Kordestan will eventually make Hashemi-Rafsanjani speak as he should and compel him to refute his recent allegations concerning the problem in Kordestan.

Pakistan

Nawaz Sharif Confirms Nation Has 'Atomic Bomb'

BK2408045794 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 24 Aug 94 p 1

[Text] Neela Butt (AJK), Aug 23 (PPI): Leader of the Opposition and Pakistan Muslim League (N) chief Nawars Sharif while sounding a warming against Indian attack on Pakistan announced that Pakistan has a nuclear bomb to meet any eventuality.

He said Indian attack on Pakistan can trigger a nuclear holocaust as both the countries possess atomic bombs. "I confirm Pakistan possesses atomic bomb," he revealed while addressing a large public rally here Tuesday [23 August], held at mark declaration of Jehad-e-Kashmir day here.

The PML chief said the Kashmiri Mujahideen have frustrated the designs of Indian security forces to crush the liberation movement. He said despite unprecedented atrocities committed by the Indian forces on the innocent people of the held Kashmir, the Mujahideen are struggling against the Indian occupation. The day is not far off when the people of held Kashmir will liberate Kashmir, he added.

Lashing out at the government on its Kashmir policy, Nawaz Sharif said while Indian security forces indulged in killing Kashmiri Muslims, Benazir Bhutto is sending mango gift to Narasimha Rao and other Indian leaders.

Nawaz Sharif said Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's confession of helping Rajiv Gandhi and sending mango gift to Indian leader is a treachery with Kashmiri brethren.

He said they tried to extend their cooperation to the government on Kashmir issue but Benazir Bhutto and her government were not sincere in this regard.

Referring to the recently convening of the joint session of Parliament on Kashmir question, he said that the session

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was summoned only to elect Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan as the Chairman of the Kashmir Committee.

Continuing his criticism to the PPP government; the PML chief said it has failed to muster international support on Kashmir cause.

Leader of the Opposition said parliamentary delegations sent abroad have failed to mobilise international opinion. He said on a number of occasions we asked the government to formulate such a policy which enjoy the support of 12 crore people of Pakistan, but Benazir Bhutto is bent upon adopting PPP policy.

Turning to the Pakistan's political situation, the PML chief said, "I have declared Jehad against the PPP's government". It is the fundamental duty of the people to stand up against the corrupt rulers. President Leghari has become the most corrupt and "dishonest" person of the country, he alleged.

ICO Foreign Ministers To View Kashmir Situation

BK2408043994 Karachi DAWN in English 23 Aug 94 p 1

[Text] Islamabad, Aug 22: On receiving a positive response from the 52-member Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) [Islamic Conference Organization, ICO], Pakistan has fixed Sept 6 for hosting a four-day conference of foreign ministers at Islamabad, official sources said here on Monday [22 August].

Billed as a momentous event, Pakistan is expected to bring together the 52 foreign ministers under one roof in a bid to resolve the four main issues facing the Islamic world viz. Kashmir, Bosnia, Afghanistan and Palestine: "The OICFM [Organization of Islamic Conference Foreign Ministers] will review each of these in detail and will take concrete decesions regarding them," an informed source told DAWN.

The OICFM, preceding the 40 UN General Assembly session, scheduled in New York for September 20, will set the tone for the 3-month UN session through tackling the four thorny issues at Islamabad before taking them to the world body, and through a unified position at the UN will forge a solution, diplomatic analysis said here.

Asked if Pakistan, during the OICFM, will table its human rights resolution, which it tabled last March at the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva against Indian atrocities in occupied Kashmir, informed source said: "Since Kashmir will be discussed at length at the OICFM, there is a possibility Pakistan may table its resolution. Meanwhile, the Foreign Office went into top gear here or Monday OICFM, appointing Riffal Mehdi, current Pakistan's Ambassador to Belgium, as the chief coordinator of the conference. It may be recalled that Mr Mehdi had held the same position curing last April's OICFM which was held in Karachi.

Besides, nine other committees have been formed, which met at the Foriegn Office to work out the logistics and the modalities of the conference. The committees, which are being headed by additional secretaries and senior Foreign Office officials are Hospitality and entertainment, Press and publicity; Procurement and finance; Administration; Political; Conference seminars; Works and security and Conference documents.

Prior to Monday, uncertainty prevailed regarding the convening of the conference, as countries like Yemn and Bangladesh had voiced reservations. After Pakistan got the desired number of acceptance, which constituted two-thirds of the 52-member committee, Islamabad, on Monday, launched full-fledged preparations for the OICFM which would have been otherwise postponed till 1995 since Tunisia had regretted over its inability to host it this year.

Electronics Cooperation With PRC To Increase

BK2408053394 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 24 Aug 94

[Text] Pakistan and China have decided to increase their existing cooperation in the field of defense electronics production. The decision was made during talks between the two sides in Islamabad. The Chinese delegation was led by Vice Minister for Electronics Zhang Jinziang and the Pakistani side by Secretary for Defense Production Mazhar Rafi.

The Chinese minister also met with Defense Minister Aftab Shaban Mirani yesterday. He reaffirmed China's continued assistance to Pakistan and said his country is ready to provide sophisticated electronic equipment for Pakistan Air Force aircraft.

Sri Lanka

EPDP Welcomes Talks 'If LTTE Sincere'

BK2308145694 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0613 GMT 23 Aug 94

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 22 Aug (LANKAPUVATH)—EPDP (Eelam People's Democratic Party) leader, Douglas Devananda, yesterday said his party would welcome government-LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] talks to end the war in the north.

In a statement he said: "If the LTTE comes forward for talks with sincerity and not to consolidate its military strength during the negotiations, we certainly welcome it".

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He said the talks should be transparent and all democratic forces should be able to make their contribution.

He said the EPDP had not only joined mainstream politics but had also teamed up with democratic forces fighting the LTTE.

"Until the LTTE joins the mainstream of democracy, the necessity to fight it remains for the democratic forces. The EPDP realised this need and supported all democratic forces without joining any specific party or group".

He said the EPDP had decided to honour the decision of the Sinhala people who had rejected the communalists and given a mandate to the People's Alliance to work out a solution to the ethnic problem.

"We have secured nine seats in Jaffna District. We are certainly not going to bargain with these seats. We will respect the feelings of our Sinhala brothers and sisters who wanted a change. We will respect their verdict and will not stand in the way of the government of Chandrika Kumaratunga", the statement said.

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